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THE JILT

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THE JILT.

A COMEDY DRAMA IN FIVE ACTS.

BY

DION BOUCICAULT.
H

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SAMUEL FRENCH,
PUBLISHER,
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Amended,
E.A.W. May 1, 18.

THE JILT.

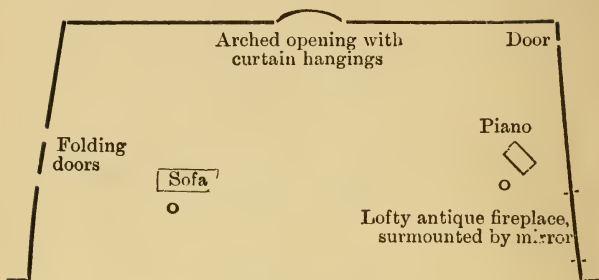
*Produced at the Prince of Wales' Theatre, London,
July 29th, 1886.*

CHARACTERS:

Myles O'Hara ... ..	...	...	MR. DION BOUCICAULT.
Sir Budleigh Woodstock	...	...	MR. J. G. GRAHAME.
Lord Marcus ... ..	...	..	MR. LETHCOURT.
Colonel Tudor ... ..	...	...	MR. JOHN BILLINGTON.
Geoffrey Tudor... ..	...	...	MR. FRANK RODNEY.
Rev. Spooner ... ..	...	...	MR. E. W. GARDINER.
Mr. Wilcox ... ..	...	...	MR. SIDNEY HARCOURT.
Mr. James Daisy ... ..	...	...	MR. J. G. TAYLOR.
Cripps ... ..	...	...	MR. BELTON.
Kitty Woodstock ... ..	...	...	MISS THORNDYKE.
Lady Millicent... ..	...	...	MISS MYRA HOLME.
Phyllis Welter ... ..	...	...	MISS WEBSTER.
Mrs. Welter ... ..	...	...	MISS MARY BARKER.
Mrs. Pincott ... ..	...	...	MISS LE THIÈRE.

ACTS 1, 2, AND 5.

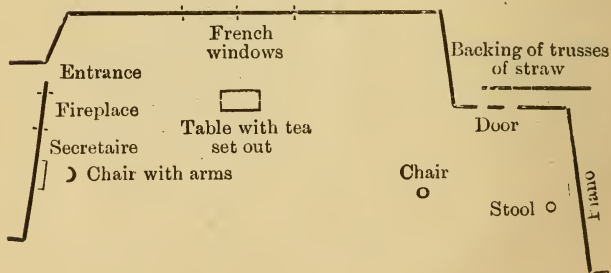
Conservatory Backing.



The above plan indicates the necessary setting and articles actually brought into use. Furniture and occasional chairs may be added according to size of stage.

ACT 3.

Garden Cloth.



As the scene in Act 4 depends entirely upon the size of stage, a strict form of setting is not required.

THE JILT.

ACT I.

SCENE: *Baronial Hall Interior.*

WILCOX, 6 FOOTMEN, 4 GROOMS, 2 COACHMEN, 3 GARDENERS and 4 MAIDS discovered.

Music at rise. Shouts outside at rise. Joybells. Music in orchestra.

Enter MRS. PINCOTT from R.U.E.

MRS. PIN. (*down c.*) Here they come. (*up to conservatory*) The bride and bridegroom are coming home to the Abbots. (*shouts outside*) Do you hear the tenantry? (*down L.C.*)

WILCOX. (*going into conservatory and looking off*) They are throwing their hats in the air.

MRS. PIN. (*L.C.*) They would throw their hearts in the air if they could. (*Band plays "Home, Sweet Home."*)

WIL. (*down c.*) Now range yourselves to receive our master. (*stands R.C.*; MRS. PINCOTT crosses to L. and stands at head of piano. Cannon, shouts, joybells, &c., as SIR BUDLEIGH and MILLICENT enter c. from R. Servants bow, maids curtsy.)

SIR BUD. (*goes up to back conservatory*) My friends, (*cries of "Order! order! silence!" outside*) let me present to you all the Lady of Budleigh Manor—my bride, Lady Woodstock. (*cheers outside*) Let her share my place in your hearts. She bids me thank you for your welcome. Her future life will be passed amongst you. She hopes to earn your love! (*cannon and cheers. SIR BUDLEIGH and MILLICENT advance c. Servants bow. SIR BUDLEIGH down c. and passes MILLICENT in front of him to R.C. just in front of sofa R.*) Welcome to your home! Here is your household to receive you. (*going to MRS. PINCOTT and bringing her towards c.*) This heap of goodness is Mrs. Pincott—the oldest and best—my nurse that watched over my childhood—spoiled me—you did, you dear old rosy, more rosy than ever. (*passes MRS. PINCOTT across to MILLICENT L.C.*)

MRS. PIN. Oh, Sir Budleigh—I—I—can't say how glad I am—for crying. (*crosses to MILLICENT*) God bless you, my lady!

SIR BUD. (*going towards GROOM, R. WILCOX falls back*) Eh! William, I am glad to see you so hearty. All well in the village?—that's good. (*moving up c. to FOOTMEN*) And John, too! How's the old mother—bravely? And Stephen. Is that Susan?—not married yet? And Jane, too?—you have not left the dairy? Eh, lasses! but that is right, stick to me and the Abbotts. And little Joe—promoted to the stable, eh? Bless all your happy faces. What would Budleigh Abbotts be without you? (*advances to MILLICENT C. MRS. PINCOTT. retires up L.C. All exeunt R.U.E. except WILCOX and MRS. PINCOTT, who go up into conservatory*)

WIL. Thank you, sir.

SIR BUD. (*at fireplace with MILLICENT*) At last my darling (*embracing her*) is by her own fireside. How do you like your new home? (*looking round*)

MIL. My eyes are so full of tears I cannot see. But where is your sister?

SIR BUD. (*taking L. corner*) Ay, where is Kitty?

MRS. PIN. (*c. advancing to table at end of sofa R.H.*) Miss Woodstock left here an hour ago with Lord Marcus; they rode out to meet you at Lyndon Pyke.

SIR BUD. (*L.H.*) And we came by Darley Green, so we missed them. (*going up to c.*)

WIL. (*conservatory, and looking off R.*) Here she comes, sir, galloping across the fields.

SIR BUD. (*up c.*) That girl will break her neck some day.

MIL. (*down by fireplace L.*) Why does she not ride by the road?

SIR BUD. Because she is Kitty Woodstock and she knows only one road in the world, and that is a straight one—on horseback or on foot.

MRS. PIN. (*up R.C.*) Her brother's sister! A Woodstock down to the ground. (*whistle outside R.*)

SIR BUD. There she is! Haw! Haw! Haw! Do you hear that?—'tis Kitty! When we were children we invented a code of whistles to bother Uncle Jack, who never could understand us talking to each other like birds about the house and across the fields. (*whistle repeated*) I hear, Kitty! I am coming! (*runs out R.*)

MIL. (*to MRS. PINCOTT*) I was not aware that Lord Marcus was stopping here.

WIL. (*advances c.*) No, my lady, he is with his regiment at the barracks near by.

MRS. PIN. (*at back of table*) But he calls here daily. Indeed, folks say he wants to marry Miss Woodstock.

MIL. Indeed!

MRS. PIN. (*looking at WILCOX*) The servants' hall don't take to his lordship. (*WILCOX shakes his head.*)

MIL. (*laughing*) Oh! you withhold your consent. (*MRS. PINCOTT crosses to R.C.*)

Enter KITTY and SIR BUDLEIGH C. from R. He passes her over to MILLICENT, R.C.

SIR BUD. Millicent, here is your sister Kitty.

MIL. When Budleigh gave me the family jewels he told me he had left one at home that I must set in my heart.

KITTY. (*R.C.*) Has the rogue left any room there? (*kisses her*) Oh, my dear, I was so vexed to hear that all our arrangements for your reception had ended in such a failure. Lord Marcus had drilled the peasantry to keep their ranks, but when they caught sight of Budleigh there was no holding them.

SIR BUD. Haw! haw! I stood up in the carriage and gave a view hollo. When the dogs heard my voice the whole kennel broke loose, and gave us a concert that shook the woods until the trees rustled with joy. Haw! haw! It brought the tears to Milly's eyes, the first I ever saw there. But where is Marcus?

KITTY. (*L.*) I gave him a lead over the holly fence. I thought he was following me. (*crosses L.H.*)

MARCUS. (*entering C. from R. and walking down C.*) He tried but he struck there! (*gives hat and stick to WILCOX*)

BUD. (*going to him, shaking his hand, then going to R.*) Glad to see you, old fellow. Here is an old friend of yours, Milly. (*drops down a little R.*)

MIL. (*crossing to MARCUS*) Lord Marcus, I give you both my hands.

MARCUS. Accept my sincere congratulations. (*crosses down to R. corner, as he passes shakes BUDLEIGH'S hand*)

WILCOX. (*advancing R.C.*) Would her ladyship desire any service before dinner?

MIL. A little tea, if you please.

MRS. PIN. Your room is quite ready if you wish to remove your things.

MIL. Thank you— (*crosses to MARCUS*) if I may. (*going R.U.E. Exit MRS. PINCOTT and WILCOX*)

SIR. BUD. Stop! (*stops her C., giving her his arm. MARCUS gets down R.*) I must do the honours and show you the dove-cote that Kitty has prepared for you—and a little corner which she calls my growlery. (*MARCUS gets R. As*

they move towards conservatory the servants exeunt in precedence. Exeunt MILLICENT and SIR BUDLEIGH. SIR BUDLEIGH runs back quickly and whispers to KITTY.) Isn't she lovely? Are you disappointed?

KITTY. She is adorable.

BUD. Thank you. Bless you. (*runs out R.*)

MARCUS. (*advancing C.*) Now that his bride takes your place by your brother's side don't you feel out in the cold?

KITTY. No; he has two sides. I am content with one of them.

MARCUS. Oh, Miss Woodstock, may I not hope that some day—— (*taking off gloves*)

KITTY. Yes, hope if you like, but don't expect. I draw the line at hope. (*gets R.H.*)

MARCUS. Are you incapable of love?

KITTY. I am full of it; I love Bud, (*getting to C.*) I love Uncle Jack, I adore my cousin Geoff; I could not live without my foxhound Jerry, and my mare Snow-drop is indispensable to my existence. (*at archway*)

MARCUS. (*crosses to L.*) I wish I were Snow-drop—or Jerry.

KITTY. Oh, dear! Why cannot a girl have a friend without spoiling him into a lover? That means the end to everything. (*gets to piano*) I like you awfully.

MARCUS. (*going to C.*) You seem glad to see me when I visit the Abbots.

KITTY. So I am to see visitors to the Park who are welcome to admire the place. (*takes flower from bowl on piano*)

MARCUS. Can I do nothing to please you?

KITTY. I will tell you what *not* to do. Don't follow me about with a box of sweets as children try to catch birds by putting a piece of salt on their tails. Ha! ha! If ever I do fall in love I must plunge into it unawares—and before I know where I am. (*she is running out and is met in C. by MYLES O'HARA, into whose arms she plunges*) Oh!

MYLES. (*saying grace*) For what we have received, may the Lord make us truly thankful! (*she starts away in confusion*)

KITTY. I beg your pardon, sir. (*runs out. He looks after her. MARCUS gets to L.*)

MARCUS. (*annoyed*) You present yourself without much ceremony!

MYLES. Egad, sir! It was the most delightful ceremony I ever encountered. I trust there is no offence in my appreciation. 'Tis the first time I ever saw an angel disguised in a riding-habit. The servants outside seemed rather disordered. So, as I could find nobody to carry in

my card, I brought it myself. (*he puts card down on table.*
MARCUS *at fire*)

MARCUS. (*crosses to R.*) If you understood the preparations you saw on foot, I feel surprised you intruded business on the Squire upon such a day.

MYLES. I am not looking for Sir Budleigh, but for a certain Lord Marcus Wylie. They told me at the barracks below that I might find him here.

MARCUS. (*negligently takes up the card, reads, and gets to piano*) Myles O'Hara! Oh! I beg your pardon. Your name is so celebrated in the sporting world that I feel we are already acquainted. I am the person you seek.

MYLES. Then let me deliver myself as briefly as possible. (*puts hat on table*) I have just received a letter from my friend and your old comrade, Fred Dacre. (*sits on sofa and pulls out pocket-book*)

MARCUS. I hope he is well.

MYLES. God knows, for he was dying when he wrote. He sends me his will. You are named one of the executors, I am the other. He divides his property between us. (*gives letter to MARCUS*) You will perceive the letter is dated six months ago. It has been dodging me from place to place.

MARCUS. (*walking to R., reading endorsement on envelope*) Myles O'Hara, Esq., The Curragh, Kildare. "Gone away—Try Tattersalls." "Care of the Clerk of the Course, Newmarket." "The Jockey Club, Paris." "The Paddock, Epsom."

MYLES. My address is a little locomotive. Pray read his instructions to us. You will find enclosed a packet for yourself.

MARCUS. (*opening letter*) Poor Fred! Did he leave much?

MYLES. He leaves you, sir, one half share in Ballinahinch.

MARCUS. That is some Irish estate, I presume?

MYLES. No, sir, much better. It is a horse, bred upon our place in Galway. It was all the property my poor father left me when he died! To pay the funeral expenses I had to saddle the foal with a mortgage. Our friend Dacre furnished the money, and so bought one half of him. But may be, you would prefer cash to horse-flesh. If so, I will give you five hundred for your share. When I say I'll give—I mane, of course, I'll borrow it.

MARCUS. I prefer to retain my partnership with Mr. O'Hara.

MYLES. There's three of us. Ballinahinch is the head of the firm.

MARCUS. So poor Dacre is gone. I presume he is dead.

MYLES. I'm afraid he is scratched.

MARCUS. What ailed him ?

MYLES. A woman ! A woman ! She scooped Fred's heart out ! Then when he brought her up to the altar and put her nose on the rails, she shied and landed him with a broken life.

MARCUS. I think I know the girl who jilted him.
(*crosses L.*)

MYLES. I'm glad I don't.

MARCUS. And Dacre never got over it ? (*crosses to fire*)

MYLES. (*crosses to R.C.*) Never ! He went away like a wounded bird to die in a ditch ! Poor boy. Everybody loved him. Nothing ever came between himself and me but a bottle of claret, or a pack of cards ! He never disputed, except over who should have the privilege of paying the bill. Ah ! He won a pot of my money. And I'd lose it again—if I had it—to have him here now and look into his honest blue eyes. (*gets to c., takes hat*)

MARCUS. And all for a woman ? (*up facing fireplace*)

MYLES. (C.) They are unreliable cattle, my lord. As my poor father lay on his death-bed he held me by the hand—he squeezed it softly. I knew he was going. “Myles,” he said, “my darlin' boy, stoop down,” whispered, “Never put your money on a mare,” and he died !

MARCUS. (*going to read the letter*) Will you excuse me ?

MYLES. Certainly. (*goes into conservatory*)

MARCUS. (*finds in envelope a packet of letters tied with red ribbon, and a letter. He reads*) What is here ? A packet of letters addressed to Sir Budleigh ! (*reads letter*) “My dear Wylie”—um—um—“not a week to live”—um—um—“reckon on you—last favour”—um—um—“it may save Budleigh from deadly reptile”—um—um—“packet contains her letters to me”—phew ! “I bequeath this packet to Budleigh Woodstock.” Too late (*crosses to R.*), Dacre—Budleigh has married the jilt. But by Jove what an eye-opener this correspondence would be to poor Bud.

MYLES. (R.C.) Well, my lord, I will not intrude further. Good morning.

MARCUS. (R.) Have you met Sir Budleigh ?

MYLES. (R.C.) I have, on settling days. The boy was a handsome loser, and when he won he took his cake with the shy reluctance of a girl. A gentleman all over, if I know one.

MARCUS. I am sure he will be glad to see you.

MYLES. Another time——

MARCUS. Where are you staying ? (*crosses to L.*)

MYLES. We are at the Budleigh Arms.

MARCUS. We ?

MYLES. The horse and myself ! I never lave him ! It is a jooty I owe the public that have put their money on him. I'd not let any other hand give him food or drink or rub him down. He knows no other voice. Then on the home-stretch, when I call upon him, his sowl is mine—and he will win or die !

MARCUS. But the Budleigh Arms is a roadside public-house, without decent accommodation. (*goes up*)

MYLES. It is as dry as a cigar-box, I assure you, and as sweet as the breath of a cow ! I would not ask for better quarters !

MARCUS. Are you speaking of your rooms ?

MYLES. Oh, no ! the stable.

Enter LADY MILLICENT, C. from R., meeting MYLES ; he bows and exits C. and L. MARCUS gets R.H. Enter WILCOX and SERVANT with tea. Change lines.

MARCUS. Permit me to wait upon you.

MIL. (*to WILCOX*) Lord Marcus will serve the tea. (*MARCUS crosses round to tea-table*) Please tell Sir Budleigh he will find me here. (*Exeunt WILCOX and SERVANT*)

MARCUS. (*after a pause*) Well ?

MIL. Well !

MARCUS. You married him after all ?

MIL. Yes.

MARCUS. I helped you to land the biggest fish of the season ! (*stirring tea*) An old title, a splendid estate ! It is said he settled upon you his entire funded property.

MIL. Yes. I secured a prudent lawyer to represent a fatherless girl, and he sold me well. (*gives up cup*) A race-horse never fetched a higher price—a picture by one of the old masters never realised a higher figure. (*rises*) I was a proud girl when I led my happy victim from the altar. (*cross to fireplace L.H.*)

MARCUS. And left a dozen broken hearts upon it. (*walks to fireplace*)

MIL. (*leaning on piano*) The world thought he was an infatuated fool, and when I swept his fortune into my lap they regarded me as the longest head in London. (*sits L.*)

MARCUS. They said you had won a big stake.

MIL. A mistake, Wylie. Two months after our marriage I sent home for the settlement and threw my price into the fire.

MARCUS. (C.) Did he permit you to make that sacrifice ?

MIL. He knew nothing about it. My dear Lord Marcus, I am in love with my husband.

MARCUS. In love with Budleigh ?

MIL. Hopelessly.

MARCUS. Good heavens, how dreadful ! (*step or two to R.*) When did this happen ?

MIL. A few weeks after our marriage, when I discovered the simple, noble gentleman we had mistaken for a fool ; when I shared his life and found myself in a new world, oh, so different from the sordid, selfish circle in which you and I have lived and schemed ! And I felt I had emerged from the stifling atmosphere of a hothouse into the pure air of heaven, and with every breath I drank in love. (*gets up C.*)

MARCUS. (*crosses to R.*) Splendid, quite so. I did not think it was in you ! Altogether like Tennyson ! Can't understand it, don't you know—don't believe anybody does—but, by Jove ! you are the last girl I expected to turn out a plunger ! The most accomplished flirt—the most daring jilt—forgive me for saying so !

MIL. (*comes down*) Go on ! I was a woman without heart, conscience, or pity. I had none for those whose love I provoked, and whose devotion I exacted. Oh, the shame of it ! How vile it was ! (*sits down to fireplace*)

MARCUS. (*C.*) It is all bygone and buried now !

MIL. (*L. at fire*) Do you think I can forget it—that I am not jealous of that past for his sake—jealous of every word of love to which I lent a willing ear ? Oh, that my tears could wash it all away !

MARCUS. (*crosses round to tea-table*) Have you forgotten Fred Dacre ? Surely you loved him ?

MIL. I thought so at the time, but I know better now.

MARCUS. What confessions did you make in the letters you wrote to him ?

MIL. To Fred ?

MARCUS. Yes.

MIL. He has not preserved them ?

MARCUS. You do him injustice.

MIL. Are you certain ?

MARCUS. Quite — here they are. (*MILlicent turns to*

MARCUS) He sent them to me.

MIL. To you ?

MARCUS. I am his executor.

MIL. He is not—dead, is he ? (*rises*)

MARCUS. Read that letter. (*hands her the letter. MARCUS goes up C. back to audience, to window*) Can you bestow pity on a man who so reviles you ? (*points to letter*)

MIL. He loved me so. (*hands back letter, sits L. by fire*)

MARCUS. What do these letters contain ?

MIL. The confession of a love-sick girl.

MARCUS. Your husband has no right to call you to account for what was antecedent to your engagement to him.

MIL. But it was not antecedent.

MARCUS. You mean that you entertained both lovers at the same time ? (*MILLICENT nods*) Were these letters written after you had pledged yourself to your husband ?

MIL. Yes ; some of them were sent after Fred to Egypt. I asked him to forgive me. I deplored my fate and our poverty. I compared the transports of a life in his arms with the repugnance I felt for my sale to a man I could never endure.

MARCUS. And you did not mean a word of it ?

MIL. Yes, I did while I wrote. (*rises*) Yet it was not love that prompted me to write. Thirst for admiration is to some girls what drink is to you men. We indulge in the cup until we cannot live without its excitement. It withers all wholesome appetites in our hearts. Prurient sentiment soon grows into a craving passion, to satisfy which we sacrifice all that is womanly, as I have done. (*goes up c.*)

MARCUS. It is fortunate these letters have been entrusted to me. They shall be destroyed.

MIL. Dacre bequeathed those letters to Sir Budleigh. (*crosses to MARCUS*)

MARCUS. Yes, but no one knows of their existence but our two selves.

MIL. Are you justified in destroying them ?

MARCUS. I am justified in protecting my future sister-in-law and the family into which I hope to enter. (*bringing her down c., kisses her hands*) On the day that Miss Woodstock becomes my wife I will hand *you* this packet.

MIL. Has she accepted you ?

MARCUS. Not exactly. It needs only that Sir Budleigh should press my suit. His influence over her heart is paramount.

MIL. As mine is over him. I see ; it is a bargain you propose. I am in your power, and I am to be used as an instrument to work your ends ?

MARCUS. You misunderstand me.

MIL. I think not. (*goes L.H.*)

MARCUS. I have not made myself clear.

MIL. So clear that I can see through you. You forget, my lord, that we were confederates before I was married.

I know you; you are the penniless son of a penniless peer. Reared in sordid splendour, you live by the turf; you are hopelessly in debt. Kitty is an heiress. Her fortune is the price you propose I should pay you for committing a breach of trust—that is the English of it.

MARCUS. Then why don't you put it into French? English puts so rough a point on things. I only want to protect *you*.

MIL. And I only want to protect that man whose wife I am. Not for myself, but for his sake.

MARCUS. That is the way to put it! Quite so. Let us consider him. (*gets R. of piano*)

BUD. (*outside*) Down, Ponto, down!

MARCUS. (*up C., down to piano*) Here he comes. Compose yourself; he will suspect.

MIL. He never suspects.

Enter SIR BUDLEIGH. MILLICENT *runs to him. He stops her.*

BUD. Don't touch me. I've been through the stables and the kennels, and I'm all over dog. And—oh, Marcus, whom do you think I met there? Myles O'Hara. He told me he had been calling on you, so I took the liberty of asking him to dinner. I hope, Milly, you will forgive me. He is a royally good chap.

MIL. I have surely heard his name before.

BUD. Of course you have; he is the great steeple-chase rider that Fred Dacre used to swear by. (*MILLICENT turns away and circles slowly to back of sofa*) He owns the great Irish horse that stands to win the County cup. (*goes to sofa*)

MARCUS. But your own stable is in that race. Locomotive and Thunderbolt are entered.

BUD. (*sits on sofa*) Don't back them, Marcus. Mrs. Welter, my trainer, says that Locomotive is well named because he can't stay! Haw! Haw! And Thunderbolt is well named, for no one can ride him. He is such a devil.

MARCUS. (*gets back to fire*) He carries Phyllie Welter after the hounds, and is like a lamb under her, but no one else can handle him.

MIL. Phyllie Welter, who is she? (*sitting back of sofa*)

BUD. The sweetest little thing that lives—just a bit of sunshine. She is the daughter of my old trainer, who died six years ago—too honest to leave a shilling to his widow, who begged me to let her run my racing stable until I was suited with a man.

MARCUS. She took it in hand in such style that it soon stood second to none in Newmarket.

BUD. That woman has an eye and a heart for a horse that is a gift. She is Yorkshire in petticoats. Haw! Haw! Who has Kitty invited to meet us at dinner to-day?

MARCUS. Colonel Tudor, of course.

BUD. Uncle Jack! Bless him; and Geoff—is he at home?

MARCUS. Yes.

BUD. I'm glad of that. I love the boy. He's plucky. The dogs are fond of him.

MARCUS. So is Phyllie Welter.

BUD. Nonsense! They are only a pair of children—play-fellows. Geoff is still at Eton, and Phyllie has not cut her second teeth.

MARCUS. I don't care. Mrs. Welter is blind to what is going on between them.

BUD. (*rises and crosses to MARCUS*) Phyllie is my ward, Lord Marcus. Her mother knows that Geoff is a Woodstock, the son of my father's sister. No one of our blood ever wronged a woman or a friend.

MARCUS. I only spoke in fun.

BUD. I never could see a joke, especially on such subjects. I'm such a fool.

MIL. (*advancing to L.C.*) Bud, would you like me to ask Miss Welter to dinner?

BUD. (*catching her in his arms*) What an angel you are! I say, Wylie, isn't she? By Jove, what she ever saw in me to stoop down to! I can't get over it!

MIL. Stop it, Bud.

BUD. I can't; it overflows, don't you know? Wylie doesn't mind! Do you, old man? (*MARCUS goes up R.*) Sometimes I forget myself at table and break out before the servants or strangers. Then, do you know what she does?—haw! haw!—she hands me a spoon—as a hint to stop it. Haw! haw! a private signal. Haw! haw!

MIL. I shall beg Kitty to have the plate basket placed within my reach to-day. (*down L.H.*)

BUD. Oh, that reminds me of Spooner, our curate. I hope he's coming. I can't get on without Spooner—who is mildly and hopelessly in love with Kitty. He keeps me in countenance. He is an Oxford lout. (*MILLICENT crosses*) He never could learn to ride. I am a Yorkshire lout, I never could learn to spell. We pair off. Haw! haw! (*bell heard, he crosses to MILLICENT*)

MARCUS. (*at back C.*) There goes the first dinner-bell. I have just time to ride over to my quarters and change my dress, if your ladyship will excuse me.

Enter WILCOX.

WIL. (*announcing*) Colonel Tudor. (*exit*)

Exit MARCUS c. *window.*

BUD. Uncle Jack! (*runs up and meets COLONEL TUDOR, as he enters*) And as fresh as paint.

COL. Budleigh, my boy, you are as welcome as the foxes in October. Get out of the way. I want to see your wife. (*crosses to MILLICENT*)

BUD. Milly, this rude old man is Uncle Jack, my guardian, the king of trumps. Haw! haw! (*crosses R.*)

COL. My dear (*takes her hands*) will you give me a kiss? (*she kisses him*) They tell us you were the reigning belle in London—that you had the choice of titles and great fortunes, and amongst them all you chose our Bud. We do not think any woman good enough for him.

BUD. Oh! oh!

COL. But you don't look like a woman. (*BUDLEIGH up C.*) I never had any clear idea before of what an angel looked like.

BUD. Oh, I say, Milly, why don't you hand Uncle Jack a spoon? (*Enter KITTY in dinner dress, with MRS. PINCOTT, L.H.*) Here's Kitty, with all her harness on.

KITTY. Mrs. Pincott will show you to your rooms. (*at back of sofa*) I have seen your dresses laid out; they are lovely. (*comes down to fireplace. COLONEL TUDOR accompanies MILLICENT to door, there kisses her hand with old-fashioned courtesy. He looks after her*)

BUD. (*R.C.*) Eh, eh, well?

COL. (*R.*) Perfect.

BUD. Haw! haw! She was a great prize in London—a dozen titles and fortunes at her feet; but I—the lout, the fool, carried her off. Eh?

COL. I wish my son Geoff may get so charming a creature.

BUD. (*to KITTY*) Eh, Kitty? Haw! haw!

KITTY. So sweet, so gentle. (*Exit MRS. PINCOTT, R U.E.*)

BUD. (*turning from one to the other and beaming with delight*) Haw! haw! haw!

COL. I am in love with her myself!

KITTY. She is an angel!

BUD. Angel! They will want her in Heaven for a pattern. Everybody worships her. She is not a woman; she is a lovely epidemic. Wait—you wait until she—she— By Jove! you will be in for it like me. And to think she is mine. Eh? Mine! I can't believe it. There—it's no use. (*going out*) Tol-der-rol. Haw! haw! haw! (*struts up very proudly and exits R.*)

KITTY. Oh, how he loves her! Will anybody ever love me like that? (*going up, looking after BUDLEIGH, crosses R.* COLONEL *crosses to fireplace*)

COL. Of course somebody will. You will take her place in London next season and be the reigning belle.

KITTY. (*by sofa*) Oh, yes, and live in a square, where Nature is put into prison for trespass; and every morning I must figure in a horse show in the Row—where the prize animal on parade is the girl! Live in London, where there are no dogs, no flowers? No, Uncle Jack! (*crosses, puts fan on piano*) No, no, no! Now listen to my plan.

COL. Oh, you have got a plan?

KITTY. A sweet one. Now Budleigh is married, he won't want me at his heels all day, as I used to be. It's no use my whistling to him now. Well, you shall take me home to live with you; you are all alone—so am I. I'll be your little housekeeper. We shall wait until Geoffrey is through college, and then—I will marry him, and so I need never leave the Abbots—never. Isn't that nice?

COL. Very fine indeed! (*down c.*) My son has not a penny. You will have twelve thousand a year. I am your guardian, and you ask my consent to throw yourself away on a scapegrace! (*turning away, L.*)

KITTY. He isn't.

COL. A worthless—

KITTY. (*following him up*) Noble fellow!

COL. An extravagant, heartless dog!

KITTY. Who adores the ground you walk on!

COL. Come to my arms! (*walk R. to L.*) You know Uncle Jack has only four hundred pounds a year; just enough to enable Geoff to hold his head up at Eton, and to put him through college. We live in the old Dower House, and have the run of the Budleigh stables. You want to share your fortune with us, but you shall not make yourself a fool, and me an old scoundrel! Marry Geoff—

Enter GEOFFREY, R.C.

GEOFF. (*c.*) Hello! Who's talking of marrying me?

KITTY. I was. It was my suggestion. I don't think you can do better. (*round to top of piano*)

GEOFF. Oh! And when is our match to come off?

KITTY. Any time. It don't matter, you know, once it is settled. (*goes up c.*)

GEOFF. (*whistles and looks into his father's face*) Meanwhile, her fortune puts me through college.

COL. And I shall set up a four-in-hand! (*they laugh*)

KITTY. What is there so ridiculous in the idea?

GEOFF. (*taking her round the waist, and brings her down*) Kitty dear, it was just two years ago you scolded me for tearing my best trousers, and helped me with my lessons.

KITTY. I know I am older than you are.

GEOFF. You were then, but you are not now! Since then I have been out in the world, where I have seen all the likely belles that are coming up. There's nothing like you in the lot. I have paraded all the beauties in London.

KITTY. Oh, Geoff! Where?

GEOFF. In the Row and at Lord's. I've looked them all over. You could give any one of them seven pounds and a beating. You don't realise what you are. You are a royal girl. Ain't she, governor?

COL. Go on, Geoff! Hark forrad!

GEOFF. You will have two hundred thousand pounds. You ought to marry a prince, not a snip like me.

COL. Just what I said.

GEOFF. I have been looking out among the Dukes and Earls at Eton to pick you out a good-shaped one. I have my eye on a fine fellow. He is one of our eleven and number four in the boat. He saw your photograph in my room.

KITTY. What did he say?

GEOFF. Nothing; he stole it.

Enter WILCOX.

WILCOX. (*announcing*) The Reverend Mr. Spooner, Miss. (*general groan*)

KITTY. Already? (*crosses to fireplace. GEOFFREY up c.*)

GEOFF. The mild rogue has stolen a march on dinner-time, hoping to find you here alone. Dad, I want to speak to Kitty. Take him away. Show him the new orchids. (*passing COLONEL in front to R.*)

KITTY. There are none.

GEOFF. No matter; show them. He may not know an orchid from an artichoke. I don't.

COL. No more do I. What is it?

Enter SPOONER.

SPOON. Oh, dear Miss Woodstock, I fear I—— (*KITTY sits on sofa*)

COL. Not at all. (*meeting him and shaking his hand*) Charmed you have come. The very man we wanted. (*taking him unwillingly to conservatory*)

GEOFF. To show you some lovely orchids. (*the COLONEL hurries him toward conservatory*)

SPOON. I protest——

COL. Just arrived; we wanted your opinion.

SPOON. But I don't know——

GEOFF. That's the very thing; an unprejudiced eye.

SPOON. I do assure you——

COL. This way. (*carries him off R.C.*)

GEOFF. Kitty, I am in a mess. (*watching them off and returning*)

KITTY. I never knew you otherwise!

GEOFF. Read that. (*hands her a paper*)

KITTY. What's this?

GEOFF. A summons desiring to know why my friend and schoolfellow Roydon Beecher fails to keep certain promises he made to pay three thousand four hundred pounds. (*bangs piano*)

KITTY. Gracious, Geoff! How could boys at Eton get into such debt?

GEOFF. Much you know about it. The book-makers of the ring and money-lenders swarm around the college, ready with credit to any amount, seeking out young fellows of eighteen or nineteen, heirs to great fortunes.

KITTY. How can they justify such an infamous pursuit?

GEOFF. They call it "cub hunting."

KITTY. And what have you to do with his debts?

GEOFF. (*takes hold of chair*) I backed his bills; you understand?

KITTY. No, dear.

GEOFF. What fools girls are. (*sits across chair L. of piano*)

KITTY. Yes, dear.

GEOFF. Roydon helped me last year when I went a mucker over the St. Leger, you remember?

KITTY. Yes, I wanted to help you, but you wouldn't let me.

GEOFF. Borrowing from girls is bad form.

KITTY. I could have invented some excuse to get it from Uncle Jack.

GEOFF. A nice transaction that would have been for *me*.

KITTY. I beg your pardon, dear.

GEOFF. Well, three months ago Roydon asked me as a mere form to put my name to some bills. I could not refuse it, could I?

KITTY. I suppose not. (*goes to chair L.*)

GEOFF. They were flea-bites to him; the son of Ricketts, Beecher and Goldshed, the great bankers.

KITTY. Was he the son of all three? (*rises*)

GEOFF. Bosh! Ricketts and Goldshed died out of the firm last century. Old Beecher is all in one! Well, the bank went up last week.

KITTY. Went up! Where to? (*moves to sofa*)

GEOFF. Smash!

KITTY. Oh

GEOFF. Roydon's father is in the *Gazette* and the money-lenders are down on me.

KITTY. Oh! Isn't that dreadful?

GEOFF. Awful!

KITTY. Cannot young Beecher help you?

GEOFF. He has given me his book.

KITTY. Ah! Has he written a book?

GEOFF. No. Oh, what a two-year-old you are—his betting-book. He stands to win five thousand on Thunderbolt. (*rises*)

KITTY. Our horse!

GEOFF. Oh, if I could only land that bet—or if I—I—could pull off enough to clear me. You can help me—

KITTY. How, Geoffrey? (*he brings KITTY down, c.*)

GEOFF. A man is dining here to-day; he knows every stable secret. You have heard of the great sporting prophet "Referee"? Everybody knows Referee. If he will give me the straight tip, he can make my fortune.

KITTY. Has he made his own?

GEOFF. No. He is as poor as a stable mouse; he never bets. He says he has no money to lose.

KITTY. What does he do on the turf, then?

GEOFF. He is a gentleman rider. He rides for the stakes and the love of the thing, just as Budleigh keeps our stable. Now you can help me to get hold of Referee. (*sofa, R.H.*)

KITTY. What do you want me to do?

GEOFF. Go for him! Mash him!

KITTY. How?

GEOFF. There are facilities that are the natural gifts of your sex, and on these subjects a girl of nineteen could plough the Colleges at Oxford and is up to more than would break the ring at Newmarket.

Enter WILCOX, R.C.

WILCOX. Mr. Myles O'Hara. (*Enter MYLES, R.C., in evening dress*)

GEOFF. (*crosses c. to him, meeting him*) Sir Budleigh and Lady Woodstock are behind time a little, so allow me to name myself their cousin, Geoffrey Tudor. How do you do? This is Miss Woodstock. (*leading MYLES to her*)

KITTY. I think we have met before.

MYLES. I should not presume to remember it.

GEOFF. Why, Kitty, you never—told me you had met—

KITTY. It was only for a moment, but I must admit Mr. O'Hara made the most of it.

MYLES. (*crosses to KITTY*) I trust you forgive my embracing the opportunity?

GEOFF. (*aside, down R.*) By Jove! she has hooked him first throw.

Enter SIR BUDLEIGH, R., LADY MILLICENT and MRS. PINCOTT.

BUD. (*up C. to MILLICENT*) Here we are! Ah, Mr. O'Hara, I am glad to see you. Let me present you to Lady Woodstock.

MIL. You are very good to come to us in this informal way.

MYLES. (*crosses C. to MILLICENT*) In affording me this opportunity to kiss your hand, Sir Budleigh has made me the happiest man in the world, bar one. (*bows to SIR BUDLEIGH*)

BUD. Where's Uncle Jack? (*enter SPOONER, who has a bouquet, and COLONEL*) Here you are. How do, Spooner? Our curate, my love. (*enter FOOTMEN, R.*) Rather short-sighted, but a splendid fellow.

Enter WILCOX, R.C.; SPOONER short-sightedly shakes hands with him. Enter LORD MARCUS, C. SPOONER shakes hand with him effusively. Bus. LORD MARCUS with eyeglass.

WILCOX. Dinner is served, my lady.

BUD. (*down C.*) Are you all here? Where is Phyllie?

MRS. PIN. I've sent the dog-cart for her, Sir Budleigh.

BUD. Well, she will drop in by-and-bye. We won't wait for her, eh? Haw! haw! Lord Marcus, will you take her ladyship? Mr. O'Hara, give your arm to my sister. We are short of women, so Uncle Jack and I will pair off.

Enter PHYLLIS; SIR BUDLEIGH starts up C. to COLONEL.

BUD. Oh, here's Phyllie at last. Spooner is in luck, haw! haw! (*exeunt arm in arm*)

SPOON. With pleasure.

GEOFFREY seizes PHYLLIS, and takes off her shawl, embraces her, C.

GEOFF. (*aside to her*) Phyllie, I am so hungry—oh, and you look good enough to eat!

PHYL. Oh! Geoff, don't! (*exit; SPOONER offers his arm. GEOFFREY throws her wrap over it, and goes out with PHYLLIS C and R.*)

SPOONER. Allow me to present! (*offering bouquet to MRS. PINCOTT, who takes it with a low curtesy; perceiving his mistake, he snatches it from her with an exclamation: "Oh!" and throwing shawl over her head, goes out C. and L.*)

QUICK CURTAIN.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*The same as preceding Act. Night. Shaded lamps and candles lighted. KITTY is at piano, playing, PHYLLIS is seated at card-table C., at the other MILLICENT leaning over her L. of PHYLLIS.*

See little table removed. Quartette on piano. Card-table and candles brought forward. Lamps lit and Limes changed. Card for WILCOX. Pink Lime in Conservatory. Take cue for Curtain from KITTY.

PHY. (C. telling fortunes) There is that dark man again ! And a letter from across the water, bringing trouble to this heart woman.

MIL. It is very strange,

KIT. (at piano, laughing) Surely you place no faith in the hocus-pocus of that little gipsy ?

Enter WILCOX, R.

PHY. Oh ! here is a marriage between a knave and a diamond woman.

KIT. Did you tell Sir Budleigh coffee was waiting ?

WIL. Yes, Miss.

PHY. These two women have some trouble over a letter. I cannot understand it.

MIL. I can.

WIL. (crosses to L.) Here is a party waiting outside, Miss, as wants to see Mr. Geoffrey.

KIT. Of course you replied that he was at dinner ?

WIL. I did, Miss, but he said if he gave his name Mr. Geoffrey would know what was the matter.

KIT. Did he give you his name ?

WIL. Here is his card, Miss.

KIT. (rises, comes down L., reads) "James Daisy and Co., early birds and straight tippers. Stable secrets always on hand. Students at college, under age, meet liberal treatment. Young England is our motto."

PHY. Old Bailey would be a better fit.

WIL. What shall I say, Miss ?

PHY. Tell him to hook it.

KIT. Phyllis ! you are a little horror ! (up to PHYLLIS ; to WILCOX.) You had better take the card to Mr. Geoffrey. (exit WILCOX) My dear child, you must not use the dreadful

expressions you pick up in the stables. You do say such awful things. (*crosses towards c.*)

PHY. Yes, I know I'm off-colour. Geoff is always down on me about it.

MIL. Horsey slang is all the go in London. The men like it. Miss Welter would make the hit of the season, her style would be voted original. They would say she was chic.

PHY. The Mater says I have too much.

MIL. Have you never been to school?

PHY. (*throwing down the cards*) No! Poor Dad was too fond of me to let me out of his sight. He liked to see me running about the place.

KIT. (*crosses to PHYLLIS*) Phyllie was cradled in a manger. She passed her childhood on horseback, and before she arrived at her teens she became the spoiled child of the hunting-field.

PHY. (*rises R.C.*) Because with my feather-weight and light hand I could ride such thoroughbred flyers as Thunderbolt. Oh! he's a devil! And I do like to feel a devil under me! It makes my heart beat when he gets mad, and we have it out together. But when he does go it is like going to Heaven. (*crosses to R. corner*)

MIL. How old are you?

PHY. Seventeen.

MIL. Have you arrived at that age without experiencing the first germ of woman's life?

PHY. Never had a germ! What is it like?

MIL. Have you met no one whose presence stirred your heart as if a breeze had whispered through its chords, whose voice renders yours breathless? (*KITTY sits in chair by fire*)

PHY. Ah! I know all about that. Mr. Spooner reads it to Kitty and me out of the "Idylls of the King," as we lie out under the cedars. We adore the "Idylls"! We named the peacock "Launcelot," and one of the pigs we called "Maud," because she was always coming into the garden. (*up to piano*)

MIL. Have you never had a sweetheart?

PHY. Lord, no! I'd have no use for one; besides I don't think Geoff would like it. (*gets R. of table; carelessly pushes cards together*)

MIL. Ah! Has he told you so?

PHY. No; but last Friday I was out with the hounds, when Thunderbolt put his foot in a hole, and I came a cropper. Tom Brandon picked me up and put me together; as he was lifting me into the saddle, he kissed me.

MIL. (*laughing*) Did you object?

PHY. No, but Geoff did ; he rode up just in time—and, oh my !

KIT. They had some words ?

PHY. Very few—they fought. Geoff licked him, and made me cry.

MIL. Because he thrashed your admirer ?

PHY. No, I did not mind that (*puts down cards and gets to piano*), but as he took me home he called me such horrible names ! I could not help what Tom did, could I ? It was rough on both of us for a little thing like that. (*goes up a little*)

MIL. But you are not sorry Geoff thought so much of it, and you have liked him better ever since ?

PHY. I could not like him better. (*goes up to conservatory*)

MIL. The open heart of this girl, like the odour of an English hawthorn bush in bloom, makes her presence sweet. She does me good. (*crosses to L. of piano. KITTY goes into conservatory with PHYLLIS*)

Enter SIR BUDLEIGH, MYLES, and COLONEL TUDOR, WYLIE and SPOONER. WILCOX and SERVANTS assist in handing round the coffee.

BUD. (*crosses to MILLICENT*) Haw ! Haw ! By Jove, Milly ! Mr. O'Hara has made a sensation in your household. His presence demoralised the servants at dinner, who mixed the courses.

COL. T. (*crosses to fire*) The rogues were listening in expectation that he would let drop a straight tip.

BUD. And as we left the dining-room we flushed a covey of maids gathered outside on the stairs to catch a glimpse of the Star of the Turf. Haw, haw ! (*MARCUS leaves SPOONER and crosses behind card-table to sofa ; KITTY gets R. of piano, followed by MYLES*)

WYLIE, who entered with SPOONER, quits his side to attach himself to KITTY. SPOONER, unable to perceive this move, mistakes for WYLIE a footman who is offering him a cup of coffee. Another footman is handing liqueurs round to guests. KITTY gets down R., MYLES following her.

SPOON. You must have observed, my dear Lord Marcus (*MARCUS goes up R.*) that the passion for racing has obtained a pernicious extension amongst the servile classes. The turf receives the countenance of royalty, so, of course, it is an orthodox pastime for the rich, but when indulged in by footmen and half-crown people of that kind——

KIT. (*to MYLES, aside*) Poor James ! how awkward !

SPOON. It becomes a social evil. (MYLES intervenes, taking the cup from FOOTMAN and his place, dismisses him. The FOOTMAN retires) These uneducated persons ape the vices of their betters. When I say vices—of course if a man can afford them, it alters the case.

MY. Altogether—entirely.

SPOON. (taking the cup of coffee) Oh, dear! it is Mr. O'Hara. How good of you! Quite entirely too good. (MARCUS gets to settee L.)

KIT. (aside to MYLES) Thank you!

BUD. What say you to a hand of cards? (getting c. PHYLLIS gets R. of table) or shall we adjourn to the billiard room? O'Hara, you, Phyllie, and I will play a match against Lord Marcus, Kitty, and the Colonel. Spooner can mark the game. (SIR BUDLEIGH crosses up to COLONEL TUDOR) You play, of course. (going out, hits SPOONER on back)

MY. I am ashamed to confess to some skill at most of the accomplishments by which birds of prey get their living.

KIT. You would not have us believe that you are one.

MY. (has taken up cards; PHYLLIS comes down) No; but I frequent the clubs where they perch and their nests in the stable. Pauper lords and penniless younger sons—the confidence men of fashion, who live in style on nothing a year.

KIT. How do they do that?

MY. Draw a card. (she draws one) It is not the five of hearts, is it?

KIT. Yes, it is. Oh—that's a trick! (SIR BUDLEIGH is up R. with SPOONER)

MY. Did you see how it was done?

KIT. No!

MY. That is how they do it! (crosses to R.)

MIL. You would make your fortune as a conjurer.

MY. What would I do with a fortune, with never a human creature to share it with me, barrin' Ballinahinch? (crosses to fire) I have no family to support, no pretence to maintain. So long as I wear my poverty frankly, I've got an independence.

MAR. Do you never play for money?

MY. Never. I have none to lose. (MARCUS offers his arm to MILLICENT and they exit L.)

PHY. (crosses behind KITTY to MYLES, taking his arm) We can play for love.

MY. I'm in funds.

PHY. What shall be the game? (crossing c. in front of table and up R.C.)

MY. Beggar my neighbour.

PHY. Oh! that is a child's game at cards.

MY. I find all games end with beggar my neighbour in the long run.

PHY. (*passing KITTY, says aside to her*) I like him.

KIT. (*aside to her*) So do I.

Enter GEOFFREY from conservatory. Exeunt MYLES and PHYLLIS L.U.E. As KITTY is going out, GEOFFREY stops her.

GEO. Kitty! (*catching hold of her dress*)

KIT. Oh, Geoff, what is the matter?

GEO. That fellow Daisy has arrived with a judgment against me. He threatens to call upon my father.

KIT. I will see the man and assure him he will be paid.

GEO. (*looks off at back*) No, he is half drunk and not fit for you to speak to. Lord Marcus can get rid of him, and Marcus will do anything for you.

KIT. What does the man want?

GEO. Here he is—go in there and listen. (*KITTY crosses back of table to conservatory; GEOFFREY sits on settee R. KITTY retires behind shrubs in conservatory*)

Enter MR. DAISY.

MR. D. May I come in? Well, have you seen your governor? Will he stump up? (*to piano c.*)

GEO. (*lighting cigarette*) Where is he to find three thousand eight hundred pounds? All he possesses in the world would not suffice to pay it.

MR. D. What's the matter with your family, they won't make up a purse to save the name from disgrace in the newspapers? That were the hexpectations as Daisy and Co. discounted. What did they mean by passing you off for a young swell, putting you up at Heton, giving you the biggest kind of show, to take in a square man like me? They have got to justify themselves afore the public. Heverybody took you for a heir to some big property! Who was to know you was a wig? (*down L. corner*)

GEO. You knew that I was the pound of flesh nearest my father's heart, and you speculated upon that.

MR. D. Ain't there some other way out of the business than bringing trouble to your folks?

GEO. I wish I could see it. (*sits on sofa*)

MR. D. (*up to card-table*) Then look here. O'Hara arrived here to-day with Ballinahinch. We never lose sight of him. We know all his moves. (*puts hat on table*) Now the Yorkshire Cup lies between his Irish horse and Sir Budleigh's Locomotive.

GEO. And O'Hara will win it.

MR. D. Oh! if we could only sell the race we would give him ten thousand. Nobody would suspect him of doing it with such a character for honourable conduct as he has got. (*advances L. of table*) What's the use of it if he don't make it pay? But there! he won't listen. You might as well talk business to the Harchbishop of York. (*turning away to piano*)

GEO. Have you tried him?

MR. D. (*leaning on piano*) We sent Spicer to him last week: he opened the subject, O'Hara changed it.

GEO. What did Spicer report?

MR. D. The last report was, he would be out in a month.

GEO. Do you propose that I should try to induce Mr. O'Hara to meet your views?

MR. D. (*puts hat and stick on table; advancing to GEOFFREY behind table*) No. There's another way. You are an hinsider, and could work the horacle. If you took a stroll in the stable nobody would look at you, and if you handled the bridle on the morning of the race (*sits cross on chair*) no one would suspect a gent like you of anything wrong.

GEO. No.

MR. D. And to paint the bit with a little bottle of stuff I'd give you would not take a minute—a minute worth five thousand pounds.

GEO. You mean that I should poison the brute?

MR. D. What do you take me for? No. Just make him a bit sleepy. D'ye see? Ha, ha!

GEO. Ha! ha! ha!

MR. D. What d'ye say?

GEO. I say that we cannot pursue the subject in (*both rise*) this house and with ladies in the next room—but if you come outside I wouldn't take a minute to paint your bit— (*advances on him; MR. DAISY retires quickly round piano to top*)

Enter LORD MARCUS WYLIE, L.

MAR. Daisy, what brings you here?

GEO. (*crosses to card-table*) A little business with me.

MAR. Take my advice, Geoff—have no dealings with this fellow.

MR. D. I wish he had took your advice before he ran nigh four thousand pounds in my debt.

MAR. (*comes down to piano up to MR. DAISY*) And you have the impudence to intrude on this gentleman here—into this house—in pursuit of this claim?

MR. D. Oh, if he prefers it I will call upon his father to-morrow. (GEOFFREY advances C.)

MAR. (to GEOFFREY) Let me deal with this scoundrel. Go, join the party in the billiard room. (GEOFFREY arm in arm up to door L.) I will settle this matter for you. And, my dear boy, be more prudent in future, for your father's sake.

GEO. Oh, Lord Marcus, I have no claim upon you to assist me.

MAR. Not yet; but I hope to establish one.

GEO. (*aside to him*) Kitty?

MAR. Yes.

GEO. By Jove, old fellow! You little suspect how deep an impression you are making upon her at this moment.

MAR. Leave us.

GEO. (*going*) Shall I tell him she is there listening to his defence of her? No, let her hear what a good chap he is. (*exit L.*)

MAR. Well, did you approach him on the stable question?

MR. D. Yes, and he was approaching me when you came in. (*watching GEOFFREY off*)

MAR. (*at fire*) If we could get his hand into this business it would strengthen mine. If both Geoff and Budleigh were at my mercy she would show me some.

Ready laugh.

MR. D. And be quick about it. Our firm, Daisy and Co. (of which you are the Co.), can't last a month. And if James Daisy goes up, you have got to go with him. (*up stage*)

MAR. Curses on the day I formed any connection with such a blackguard. (*walking up and down L.*)

MR. D. That's where it is! That's my security! And the more scaly the transactions we shared in the better for me! But what's the use of our quarrelling? How are you getting on with the heiress? What chance have we of fingerin' her fortune?

MAR. (*at fireplace*) I hold a secret concerning the past life of Sir Budleigh's bride that places her in my power. (*laugh—a peal of laughter from the billiard room is heard*) I could turn her laughter into tears if I placed these letters of hers before that infatuated fool.

MR. D. Oh, oh! Letters of hers. (*about to light cigar by candle; MARCUS throws it away*)

MAR. She dare not face them. She has confessed it, and through her influence I can secure the hand of Sir Budleigh's sister.

MR. D. Never mind the hand—what's in it?

MAR. Quarter of a million.

MR. D. Jumpin' Moses! What a stable you can keep! Eh! What am I to do with this boy?

MAR. Screw him tight. The more he squeals the better I shall look in Kitty's eyes when I release him. Every little helps. (*crosses R., then to L.*)

MR. D. You know we stand to lose a pot of money if Ballinahinch should win.

MAR. He shall lose. (*up C.*) I own one-half share in him. Dacre is dead and leaves me his interest in the horse. I will buy the other half from O'Hara, cost what it may. (*crosses to L.*)

MR. D. If he won't sell——

MAR. Then we must disable the brute. I have access to the stable now, and no one will suspect me of nobbling my own animal.

MR. D. (*R.C.*) If I could only pass my hand over the animal—first pet him—I'd put him on the retired list, and nobody would know he had been nobbled.

MAR. Your appearance in or around the (*at door U.E.L.*) stables would produce the effect of a kite over a farmyard. Be off, you scoundrel, and wait my instructions. (*exit L.*)

MR. D. (*follows him up*) Certainly, my lord. Anything you direct—all right—good evening—scoundrel yourself. If you have the bride in your power, I have you in mine. You own half the animal, but I own one-half of you! Wait till I put the screw on, my lord. The blackguard will make you squeal. (*goes up, looking after MARCUS and exit L.*)

Enter KITTY to top of piano.

KIT. I cannot believe it! Oh, the vileness of it all. What kind of woman can Millicent be to serve as the accomplice of such a man to deceive my brother and to sell (*looking after WYLIE*) me to that——! Oh, he said, "I hold secrets concerning the past life of Sir Budleigh's bride that place her in my power." (*rises*) Millicent at that man's mercy! Then God help my brother! And he is so happy, so happy! What can I do? In whom can I trust? Oh! (*throws herself on her knees at the sofa and bursts into tears*) My darling! I would give my life to save yours!

Enter MYLES; comes down L. He does not remark her presence.

MY. I believe I have got the distemper. I have all the symptoms of the great complaint. The contagion of a couple of blue eyes and a pair of red lips has turned every drop of blood in my body into wine, and my sowl is dhrunk! (*going by R. of table*)

KIT. (*sobbing*) Oh ! Oh !

MY. (*up to sofa*) What is that ? Herself ! What's the matter, Miss Woodstock, are you ill ?

KIT. No, no !

MY. (*gets L. of her*) You are in trouble, and I have no right to beg a share of it. Somebody has hurt you, and I must stand by and ate my heart.

KIT. I cannot tell you what it is. Oh, I am so helpless and so friendless. Where, to whom can I turn ?

MY. Don't turn ! Look straight before you. Let me stand between you and harm.

KIT. I have no claim on you.

MY. Make one ! Do ! Regard me as a bit of wild property, good for nothing, belonging to nobody. Drive out your sorrows on to it. Give me them to take care of. I'll ask no wages, never fear, but serve you to the last inch of my life. Ah ! you think that a long draft on so short an acquaintance.

KIT. No, no. Oh ! what could you do ?

MY. I don't know. Do you want anybody killed ?

KIT. Oh ! Mr. O'Hara !

MY. The hound that follows your heel, hearing an angry word, or seeing a hand lifted against you, would fly at the throat of your foe. Well, is it too much to ask you to treat me like a dog ?

KIT. If I had known you longer.

MY. Ah, if you were drowning and you saw me ready to jump into the wather and catch you in my arms to save your life, would you ask me to wait until we were better acquainted ?

KIT. No. (*giving him both her hands*) I will trust you. My heart tells me I may.

MY. (*sits on sofa*) God bless it.

KIT. I have been deceived and by such a serpent.

MY. The first woman made the same complaint. It runs in the female family.

KIT. Do you know Lord Marcus well ?

MY. Lord Marcus Wylie ! Well, no, not altogether. By reputation only. You must not believe all you hear.

KIT. He is a scoundrel.

MY. (*rising*) I beg your pardon ?

KIT. (*apologetic*) Perhaps I ought to beg yours. I know the word is not ladylike.

MY. Not at all ; it is comprehensive and perspicuous. It takes him in.

KIT. He took me in. Oh, surely such men are exceptions. (*MYLES rises*) Where in the world are they tolerated ?

MY. Upon the race-course and the stock-exchange. They are the camp followers of adventure and enterprise.

KIT. He is part owner of your favourite. He intends your horse shall lose the race.

MY. Not if I ride him (*crosses L.*)

KIT. He will take care you never shall. He intends to disable Ballinahinch.

MY. You have been deceived.

KIT. He was here just now, conferring with his partner, Mr. Daisy.

MY. The devil! I beg your pardon.

KIT. (*rises*) The word is comprehensive and perspicuous, it takes him in. I overheard their plans.

MY. To get at my beauty?

KIT. "Nobble" was the term he used. (*gets down R. of table*)

MY. You heard that?

KIT. Yes. (*crosses R.*)

MY. I am not surprised at the condition I found you in.

KIT. That is not all!

MY. What can be worse?

KIT. (*up to MYLES*) Millicent, my sister, is—I could not understand how—in the power of Lord Marcus.

MY. Lady Woodstock?

KIT. It is something connected with Mr. Dacre, to whom she was engaged before she married Bud. (*crosses to chair L.*)

MY. (*crosses R., aside*) Tare alive! She is the jilt.

KIT. They dragged her and me into (*enter MILLICENT*) their scheme. My fortune is their object. I overheard their infamous traffic, (*crosses L.*) where my sister's good name was handled as an asset, and my brother's honor valued as a security.

MIL. (*C. L. advancing to table*) Are you speaking of me to this gentleman?

MY. Yes, Lady Woodstock, and I find we are better acquainted than I dreamed. (*KITTY sits by fire*) I was bosom friend of Fred Dacre. The lad had no secrets from me. I lived in his heart and knew every throb of it. I have helped him many a night to cry over the cruel letters he got from (*MILLICENT sits on sofa*) Milly Dashwood. Believe me, I had no idea this morning that I was bringing these same letters here to her home.

KIT. I am sure of that. (*crosses to MILLICENT, and sits beside her*)

MY. (*crosses C.*) But it gives me the right to defend you both from the consequences. (*sits L. of table*) Regard me as a doctor called in. You know when lives are in danger

delicacy is waste of time. So, forgive me if, to diagnose your complaint, I ask you to show me your heart.

MIL. Dacre has confided my letters to Lord Marcus, with directions to hand them to Sir Budleigh.

MY. Oh, Fred! Fred! that was a mane thing to do. (*down R.*)

MIL. If my husband reads that record, his love for me will be turned to contempt. He will feel the abhorrence I have been taught to feel for myself.

KIT. (*embracing her*) Whatever you have been, you are now Bud's wife. Soul of his own soul, transfigured by his love.

MIL. He believes in me so utterly. (*MYLES rises*)

KIT. And to break his delusion would be to break his heart. I know him. He would go into the gun-room and make an end of it. (*at fire*)

Enter SIR BUDLEIGH from billiard room with a cue.

KITTY and MILLICENT start. MILLICENT rises, crosses to R. of table; KITTY to fireplace; MYLES at piano L. of it; business with music.

BUD. Where are you? Why can't you come into the billiard-room, where I can see you and hear what you are talking about? By Jove, I was getting jealous of Kitty having you all to herself. I began to feel as miserable as a dog in a crowd that had lost his master. Oh! why, Milly, what is this? (*crosses to MILLICENT; takes her down; face averted; looks to MYLES for explanation; he is occupied with the lamp to avoid SIR BUDLEIGH's observation*) Kitty, has anything happened between you two? (*crosses to KITTY and draws her to him*) Come here to me, both of you. Look into my face, my two angels. What is the matter? What has brought tears into your eyes?

KIT. You! What other matter could there be?

BUD. But I am not an exciting subject.

KIT. Yes, you are, when you come bothering us! Can't two girls be left in peace to have a comfortable cry but you must want your share? (*crosses past SIR BUDLEIGH to MILLICENT and walking arm in arm R.C.*)

BUD. Haw, haw! I'll go away if you will give me your glove. It will be something for the dog to carry in his mouth, don't you know. (*kisses her glove*)

KIT. Oh, you great big — (*putting her arms round him*)

MIL. Foolish — (*embracing him on the other side*)

BUD. Haw, haw!

KIT. Stupid!

BUD. Haw, haw!

KIT. Darling old dear ! (*the two girls lay their heads on his breast and cry*)

BUD. Haw ! haw ! haw ! I say, O'Hara, women are wonderful things, I don't understand them, do you ? D'ye see how I am buried ?

MY. (*R. of piano*) I'd die this minute to get such a funeral. (*goes up C. and shakes SIR BUDLEIGH by the hand*)

Enter LORD MARCUS L.

MAR. It is getting late, and I am on guard at the barracks to-night. Our Colonel is so strict, I must tear myself away. Lady Woodstock, we are so grateful to you for this charming evening ! (*to O'HARA*) Your inn is on my road ; shall we walk together ?

MY. With pleasure.

Enter PHYLLIS, the COLONEL, GEOFFREY, and SPOONER.

COL. T. (*down L.*) If Mr. O'Hara will take up his quarters at the Dower House we will make him royally welcome ; eh, Geoff ? (*SPOONER goes to KITTY on balcony. KITTY leaves it and gradually goes down L.C. to speak to O'HARA*)

GEO. (*at fire*) Do, sir. The racing stables adjoin our paddock. Why don't you let Mrs. Welter have your horse to train ? (*joins PHYLLIS and SPOONER in balcony*)

BUD. (*crosses to MYLES R.C.*) No, no ! We have got possession of him, and that is nine points of the law. (*gets to C., then to R.*) He shall stay here at the Abbots. Tell Pin-cott to prepare a room and send the dog-cart for his luggage. (*joins group in balcony*)

MY. Impossible ; I am due in Newmarket to-morrow.

KIT. (*comes down C. L. ; aside to him*) Doctor, you forget the case you have undertaken—forgive me if I remind you that, when lives are in danger, delicacy is waste of time—so (*offering her hand*) take your retaining fee. (*going up*) Mr. O'Hara will remain.

ALL. Bravo !

SPOON. So glad.

MY. (*aside*) I tried to escape from Paradise, but the Angel wouldn't let me. (*gets to piano*)

Enter WILCOX and FOOTMAN with overcoat and hat.

BUD. (*to MARCUS*) So sorry, old man, you are obliged to go (*GEOFFREY and PHYLLIS down to piano*) We were about to have a little music and a round game. But when duty calls——

KIT. We could not think of detaining you.

MAR. Oh, perhaps I could run the risk.

KIT. On no account. The Colonel is so strict. Good-night! Happy dreams!

ALL. Good-night!

MAR. (*chop-fallen*) Good-night. (*exit R.*)

During this the COLONEL has seated himself at card table to play cribbage. PHYLLIS and GEOFFREY at the piano are selecting pieces of music and squabbling over the choice. WILCOX and SERVANTS come in with trays on which are decanters, soda-water, and boxes of cigars.

BUD. Take a cigar to smoke on the road! (*he turns to MILLICENT, who is at the fireplace, embracing her*)

GEO. Come here, Kitty, and play this accompaniment. (*MYLES packs up cards R. of table*)

PHY. Oh, I hate that duet. This is nicer.

GEO. You are so jolly obstinate.

PHY. You want your own way in everything.

GEO. Shut up! (*COLONEL gets to L. of card table*)

PHY. I shan't! (*BUTLER supplies COLONEL with drink*)

SPOON. (*comes down R. of table, aside to MYLES*) I have a friend who is anxious to invest a trifle on the Nursery Stakes. (*MYLES chuckles aside*) Have you formed any idea of what is likely to win? I know nothing of such matters myself. (*BUTLER and SERVANT get to L.C.*)

MY. Let him back Mascot for a place.

SPOON. Mascot, an outsider, 40 to 1! Oh, thanks! I'll put a little pot upon——

MY. Eh?

SPOON. (*sits at card table*) I mean I'll telegraph my friend.

COL. T. Come, Spooner, give me my revenge. (*GEOFFREY fetches KITTY down from balcony and places her on music-stool*)

WIL. (*handing MYLES cigars and soda*) Them in the small box I venture to recommend.

MY. You are very good.

Enter MRS. PINCOTT R. with candle.

WIL. A little whiskey and soda, sir. That's some old Irish whiskey, sir. I thought I'd bring it. (*KITTY begins to play accompaniment*)

MY. Most thoughtful of you.

WIL. I beg your pardon, sir, for making so bold, but we did hear Polly Heckles was a safe thing for the Hoaks. (*FOOTMAN R. of MYLES endeavours to hear*)

MY. Safe to lose.

WIL. Oh! (*retires and FOOTMAN to L.C. at back. Two FOOTMEN with lighted candles appear at billiard-room door*)

MY. They are all in it.

COL. T. Two for his heels. (*marks the game. MRS. PINCOTT holds up a candle for MYLES to light his cigar*)

MRS. P. Would you like a fire in your room, sir?

MY. I thank you : no.

MRS. P. I have sent for your luggage to the Inn.

MY. You are too kind.

MRS. P. My son would like to put a five-pound note on the Cup.

MY. (*aside*) Oh ! the old woman wants a tip. Oh, Yorkshire! Yorkshire! the county complaint is in your old bones. (*aloud*) My dear old lady, let him back the favourite to lose.

MRS. P. What is the favourite?

MY. I don't know. I spake on general principles. (*he advances to the piano and stands behind KITTY, leaning over her. She looks up at him smiling. The song continues*)

SPOON. Fifteen two, fifteen four, and a pair is six. (*marks*)

COL. T. And a sequence you had failed to discover, so I mark it. Ha ! ha ! (*first verse of Quartette*)

BUD. Milly, my queen, this is your first night at home. Are you happy?

MIL. Oh yes, happy, so happy.

The act drop descends on the group, while the song is still in progress and the game is going on. The group of SERVANTS at the back are eagerly communicating to each other the advice given them by MYLES. SIR BUD-LEIGH and MILLICENT advance to watch the game for second tableau.

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE.—*The keeping-room in MRS. WELTER'S house.*

MRS. WELTER *discovered counting money at secretary R. A tea-table laid C.R. See chair 1 foot from desk, and chair L.C. Bank notes. Music for curtain.*

MRS. W. (R.) Eight hundred—and fifty—nine hundred—and fifty. I can't make it come out right ; there should be four thousand ! If Phyllis was home she would figure it. I wonder why she asked me to go to Wakefield this morning and draw all our savings out of the bank, £4,000, her little fortune ! Oh ! (*listens*) here she comes ; the dogs have nosed her, bless her heart. (*going up to window at back*) I hear the cattle rumblin' in their stalls. The whole yard gets alive when she lights. And she do enjoy her four o'clock tea when she comes in hot and tired. (*exit door R. H.U.E.*)

Enter DAISY by door in L.

MR. D. (*down L.C.*) What a comfortable sweet smell of tea and toast ! How tidy the place is, and it's all got the hair of being paid for ! What is going to become of it when Phyllis gets married ; the old woman will lose the only hinwestment she has in life. Why can't she take a little stock in me ? (*examines plate on table*) Solid silver, hall-marked ! (*crosses to secretary down R.*) What's here—bank notes ! Bundles of them ! (*counts notes*) one thousand—two—and three—over three thousand pounds all lying around and the door standing wide open. Eh ! (*he passes rapidly away to the other side L.H., he listens, and then suddenly*

Enter MRS. WELTER with teapot and cake. She places them on the table.

MRS. W. There !

MR. D. Good-morning, Mrs. Welter ! (*pause*) Don't you know me ? (*she goes to the secretary quickly and counts the notes*) Do you find me changed ?

MRS. W. I hope so ! What do you want ?

MR. D. Can Nellie Welter ask what Jemmy Daisy wants ? (*pitifully*) Has it come to this here ? Oh !

MRS. W. Yes, that's where it comes to. (*advancing to*

R.C.) You was the friend of my old man. When he died, and I was feeling adrift and alone, you stepped in and offered to catch hold and be a father to my Phyllis——

MR. D. (*melancholy*) To any number of 'em——

MRS. W. I did not say "No"——

MR. D. You told me to call again——

MRS. W. After my weeds! But before the year was out I heard how you lived. (*up to table*)

MR. D. Ah! how *could* I live without you? If I went to the bad, who drove me there?

MRS. W. You don't go for to mean you blame me?

MR. D. You don't know the hole you left in my life? I tried to find another woman to fill it. I tried a lot of 'em. No use! My heart was a bottomless pit.

MRS. W. I do think there used to be some good in you.

MR. D. Try if it ain't there still. You always said so. Show the world that you was right. That Jem Daisy was not so bad as he is painted. Show 'em what a good woman can do when she goes in for being a hangel. I don't come back to you empty-handed. (*puts hat on chair L.C.*) Look here! a judgment debt owin' me from young Tudor, £3,800!

Enter PHYLLIS by window, dressed in her riding-habit and cap.

MRS. W. Where is the boy to find all that money? (*settling secretary*)

MR. D. His father must get it somehow. Why, the Colonel has the handling of all Sir Budleigh's rents. He has been manager of the estates. Over twenty thousand a year has passed through his hands. D'ye suppose he has not feathered his nest?

MRS. W. Yes, I do.

MR. D. Sir Budleigh would never let him be sold up.

MRS. W. Of course he wouldn't, but the Colonel would not tell the Squire a word about it. He is too proud, too fond of his boy to expose him to humiliation.

MR. D. Then see how you and I can hold the whip-hand over the whole lot of them. Take me? Here's the debt. Let us pool our fortins! What do you say?

PHY. (*taking the paper which he holds out to MRS. WELTER; advances down C.*) She says that no such plug as you shall fill my father's place.

MRS. W. Phyllis!

PHY. Mother, have you been to Wakefield after that money?

MRS. W. (R.) Yes, there it be.

PHY. (C., *crosses to R., to DAISY*) Father owed the Colonel

an old debt, and we have been putting by our savings for the last five years to pay some of it off. There is enough here to cover your claim. Count it, and make out your receipt to Geoffrey Tudor. (*goes to MRS. WELTER*)

MR. D. (*crossing to secretary R.*) Do you mean it?

PHY. Count it. (*turns away*)

MR. D. It is all right. I've been through it. I mean I'll take your word. (*writes*)

MRS. W. (*up R.C.*) You knew of this debt?

PHY. (*C.*) Yes, Geoff told me he was up a tree.

MRS. W. (*aside to PHYLLIS*) Oh, Phyllis, 'tis all we have in the world.

PHY. And don't we owe all we have in the world to them?

MR. D. (*writing*) "Received in full. James Daisy." (*taking all the notes and crosses to L. ; is crossing out of door L.C.*)

PHY. (*taking the paper, and reading it, which MR. DAISY has left in secretary*) Stop! (*crosses to secretary*) You have taken the whole 4,000.

MR. D. There's the expenses and interest, and my commission. I've included it all.

PHY. Hand over that 200 you have nobbled.

MR. D. (*putting two notes in her hand. Pause*) I am only hacting for a third party.

PHY. Don't show your face here again, unless you want one of the boys to spoil it. (*gets back to desk*) There's the door.

MR. D. (*going*) I hope there's no ill-feeling.

PHY. Tramp! (*exit MR. DAISY*)

MRS. W. There goes our nest egg. Oh, Phyllis, you have the big heart of your father. (*PHYLLIS gives hat and whip to MRS. WELTER*)

PHY. (*sits R. of table*) And his appetite! Give me a kiss and a cup of tea. What do we want with nest eggs? I have you and you have me. I say, mother, we have been giving that Irish horse a trial this morning.

MRS. W. Did you ride him?

PHY. No; his owner did. I rode Thunderbolt.

MRS. W. Well!

PHY. Ballinahinch is a stag at timber, but he has not got the stride of our chestnut. After the first mile I had it all my own way, and I played all round him.

MRS. W. What did Mr. O'Hara say to that?

PHY. He said it was my feather-weight; but it wasn't. I did not tell him I had put two stone twelve under my saddle. He did not know the Bolt was sailing under twelve stone. Oh! mother, mother, if any of the boys could ride him he

would win! He'd win the great race, and Geoff would land a fortune.

MRS. W. What is the use of talking? The brute won't let no one but you go near him.

PHY. Yes, Geoff mounts him every morning.

MRS. W. And Thunderbolt puts him off.

PHY. No, he don't. Geoff gets up behind me, and after a kick or two the darling settles down to his work and carries us both. Oh, it's lovely!

MRS. W. You will be brought home some day on a door.

PHY. It is the only way for Geoff and him to make friends when he feels that Geoff and I are one. (*down to R.C.*)

MRS. W. Well, and what's the use of it all?

PHY. Hush! (*rises, brings down MRS. WELTER*) Geoff intends to ride him for the race.

MRS. W. What! A Tudor making a jockey of himself? The Colonel wouldn't hear of it. He is as proud as he is poor. Sir Budleigh would never allow it. They would expel the boy from his college. (*sits L. of table*)

PHY. I'd like to see them do it. Expel Geoff for winning a great event! The British people would stand a good deal, but they'd draw the line there. (*enter GEOFFREY L., puts hat on piano. PHYLLIS crosses down to R.H. corner, then runs up to GEOFFREY L.*) Oh, here he is! It is all right. I've told her and she's agreeable.

MRS. W. Stop! stop! (*bangs table*) What mad bout is this you two are up to? (*L. of table*)

PHY. For the last week we meet an hour before daylight in the Long Spinney. I'm up at four, and saddle Thunderbolt. None of the boys know we are training the horse.

MRS. W. No, no. I can't allow it. (*bringing down chair*)

GEO. And no one need know to which jockey you will give the mount until the bell rings for saddling.

MRS. W. I won't be a party to no such thing. (*placing chair C. and sitting*)

PHY. (*R. of MRS. WELTER, and a little behind her*) Then Geoff will peel, show in our colours, cherry jacket and cap, and before anyone can say knife, he's up. Don't you hear the murmurs of the crowd? "They are off, they are off!" Who's ahead? The Irish horse leads! No, the Budleigh colours are at his quarters! See, he can't shake him off!

GEO. Over the double fence they go! Safe as houses! (*L. of MRS. WELTER*) Lost behind the Spinney! How they breast the hill!

MRS. W. (*yielding to the picture and forgetting herself*) Let him out, Geoff: give him his 'ed! The water jump is a comin'.

GEO. He takes it without changing his stride.

MRS. W. He'll win! He's got it in him! No, no! put it out of your heads altogether.

PHY. Now they are coming down the home stretch. The murmurs rise to a roar. Green is ahead! The green wins!

MRS. W. (*excitedly*) Cherry for a hundred.

GEO. Three to two on the Irish horse!

PHY. Thunderbolt! Thunderbolt wins!

GEO. } *together* { Ballinahinch! Ballinahinch! I'll bet my life.

PHY. } { Thunderbolt! I'll bet my wife and family.

MRS. W. (*excited*) Lift him, Geoff! Lift him, lad!

GEO. The Budleigh horse gives his heels full of dirt to his rival, and sails in ten lengths ahead!

PHY. Hands down, mother!

MRS. W. I'll do it! (*walks up and down. PHYLLIS and GEOFFREY embrace and laugh behind her back at the success of their scheme*) I don't know where it will take me to, and don't care. What's the odds against our horse?

GEO. Fifty to one!

MRS. W. Taken—to five hundred! Put it on, Phyllis?

PHY. We have only two!

MRS. W. Sell a score of sheep and a stack of wheat. It all goes! You have got my Yorkshire up, and—dang it all!—I'll win or die! But, laws, deary me, what will Sir Budleigh say? (*sits c.*)

GEO. He will say "Let the best horse in my stable win."

MRS. W. Oh! the comfort it is to train for an honest man. How it clears the course.

Enter LORD MARCUS door L.H. in F.

GEO. Lord Marcus!

MRS. W. Hush! not a word. (*crosses to R., then up to table. GEOFFREY and PHYLLIS exit*) Leave us.

MAR. (*down L.*) Good day, Mrs. Welter.

MRS. W. My service to your lordship. (*puts chair back*)

MAR. You had the Irish flyer out on trial this morning.

MRS. W. (*busy over table removing things*) Mr. O'Hara gave him a pipe opener.

MAR. You know I am half owner of the horse.

MRS. W. He's a grand animal—a gentleman with a pedigree as long as your own.

MAR. When we entrusted him to you to be trained beside his rivals, we desired to show the sporting world our confidence by leaving the great issue in your hands.

MRS. W. They are clean ones, my lord. (*back of table packing up things*)

MAR. I am sure of it. I would like to see the horse.

MRS. W. I will attend your pleasure.

MAR. I would not trouble you so far. Where is the key of the stable?

MRS. W. It never leaves my belt.

MAR. I'll take it.

MRS. W. (*front of table*) I thought you said you would leave the issue in my hands.

MAR. What do you mean?

MRS. W. Business. My character is under that lock and key.

MAR. Do you doubt a man of my standing?

MRS. W. I don't know how you stand, but I'll tell your lordship if you will let me see your betting-book.

MAR. You forget yourself, and to whom you are speaking.

MRS. W. (C.) You are Mr. Wylie, commonly called Lord Marcus, and—other names; the son of a dook—I'm Nelly Welter, a farmer's daughter. I am a barn-door fowl, and you are a noble swan, a-swimming through the world so grand and haughty. (*comes down C. with tray*) And as you sail along no one can see the two black legs working below out of sight, that give you a push. No offence—

MAR. I shall repeat this to Mr. O'Hara and to Sir Budleigh.

MRS. W. Do, my lord, but tell them with the greatest respect that I value my character more than my place. Nobody don't 'andle Ballinahinch except hunder Nelly Welter's hown heye. (*exit R.H.*)

MAR. (*putting hat on table and taking off gloves*) This comes of mixing with low-lived scoundrels like Mr. Daisy. Of course he is bound to brag of the connection, and exposes me to this sort of thing. I must own that Irish horse, cost what it may. Then I can scratch him or run him to lose. That will give the race to Locomotive and I shall land a fortune. When the public find that O'Hara has sold the favourite, there will be a panic amongst his backers. (*enter MYLES and KITTY R.C.*) Ah! this is fortunate. I was seeking you.

MY. And we were seeking your lordship. (*puts hat on table*)

MAR. You received my note?

MY. I did. You ask me to put a price on my half of our joint property, Ballinahinch. I have no intention of parting with him; he and I are one and indivisible.

MAR. Name your figure.

MY. We are not for sale.

MAR. Every man has his price. It is only a question of the kind of money.

MY. I never saw the kind of money that could buy me.
(*invites KITTY to sit L.C.*)

MAR. (R.) You said you were seeking me—with what object?

MY. We want to make you an offer; it is a private affair entirely.

MAR. You are quite mysterious.

MY. I propose a little séance at which the assistance of this lady is essential as a confederate. (*takes a seat, brings down chair R.C.*)

MAR. This is very amusing. (*sits*)

MY. I hope you will find it so.

MAR. Now for the mystery.

MY. What the French call “*La boîte aux surprises*.” You know the English of that?

MAR. The box of surprises.

MY. The bag of tricks.

MAR. We are waiting for the first.

MY. Lady Woodstock has confessed to us both all the business between you and herself relating to Dacre’s letters.

KIT. And she explains the kind of money you expect to be paid for selling the proofs you hold against her. (MARCUS *starts up*)

MY. Trick number one—Jack in the box.

MAR. I protest on my honour that Milly is mistaken. I simply pleaded to her to use her influence over you. Surely you cannot believe me capable of so contemptible a scheme.

KIT. Will you give me the letters?

MAR. They are confided to me in trust, to deliver to Sir Budleigh.

MY. Of course. Honour forbids. Sit down. Trick number two in the bag. (MARCUS *sits*) This is quite new and very amusing, but I require the assistance of my confederate.

KIT. I am aware of what passed between you and your associate Mr. Daisy, when you informed him that, by means of the power those letters gave you over my sister, you felt sure of my hand and fortune.

MAR. It is false! You have been deceived.

KIT. I was present at the interview.

MAR. You were present?

KIT. And overheard every word of it.

MY. Come, my lord, let us accept the situation and face the question.

KIT. We fully understand that Sir Budleigh is at your mercy and will submit to any terms you may impose.

MY. You said every man had his price.

KIT. What is yours?

MAR. (*crosses to KITTY; to KITTY*) If I have been driven to desperate expedients it was my love for you that blinded me. (*MYLES puts MARCUS's chair back to table in front of it, then gets to chair by desk and sits on the arm of it*)

KIT. (*turning away*) I beg you to spare me the offence of these protestations. I cannot assist you longer at this humiliating scene. Lord Marcus, I pity you most sincerely. (*goes up*)

MAR. I cannot accept that feeling.

KIT. I have no other to give you. (*exit*)

MAR. It is very fortunate for you, sir, that the practice of duelling is not in vogue.

MY. Very fortunate, indeed. For I don't want to be tried for your murder. And when the accused is an Irishman prejudice is apt to pack the jury. I'm mighty well off. Now let us descend to prose. (*KITTY appears at window c. and listens*)

MAR. Prose by all means. Will you buy the papers? Will you pay the price I ask for them?

MY. (*sits R.*) I have not a fifty-pound note—but name some figure that I can borrow.

MAR. Your share in Ballinahinch.

MY. Sell him to you? Part with the horse to you!

MAR. (*rises, takes hat*) With all his engagements. Think it over, and let me have your answer to-morrow. You have taken a hand in my game without putting anything in the pool. I can see through yours. (*puts hat on*) You want the heiress for yourself. You love her?

MY. I do. I'm not ashamed to confess my folly, since you charge me with it. And if her fortune did not stand in my way, I'd back my chance against yours in the Maiden Stakes.

MAR. So her wealth is the impediment to your enterprise?

MY. Not a bit of it. 'Tis my poverty that disqualifies me.

MAR. You are playing a deeper game than I can understand.

MY. Very likely, because it is an honest one. (*rises*) Look here, Lord Marcus, let you and I understand one another for once. (*puts hat on*) Her brother, Sir Budleigh, opened his house and his heart to me, receiving me in both as if I were his equal. Now, you know we are only a pair of fashionable tramps. The difference between us is that I am handicapped with a conscience, and I could no more take advantage of that loyal fellow to steal his sister than I could pocket his spoons.

MAR. You have swallowed one of them. Ha, ha! My dear Mr. O'Hara, observe my position. Lady Woodstock has defied me by betraying the terms of our little engagement. Kitty has stumbled on some ugly facts, and you have backed these two girls to defeat me. (*moving to c.*) I have just one trump left in my hand.

MY. It is not an honour.

MAR. No, but it takes the trick—it takes the trick! Tomorrow morning I place in Sir Budleigh's hands the papers and trinkets confided to me, unless by that time I find our horse in my stable. Think it over. Good-day. (*at window L.F. ; exit window L.C.*)

MY. Think it over! What's the use? Oh! my beauty, must I part with you? I know what he wants you for. I feel as if I were selling one of my family into shame. They will take all the pride out of us, and our name will be a byword. The world will say I have sold the race! And what can I reply? What reason can I give those who have put their trust and fortunes on me? I have sold them for a woman's smile and a sweet word. Oh, my dear father, you were quite right when you said with your dying breath, "Myles, stoop down," and whispered, "Never put your money on a mare."

Enter KITTY ; she stands in porch looking at MYLES.

KIT. Well, have you brought him to terms?

MY. I have. (*gets to C.R.*)

KIT. What does he require?

MY. Nothing from you. Tell your sister she may rest assured.

KIT. How can I repay you?

MY. By sparing me any questions about it, and by remembering kindly a poor devil that crossed your path, to whom you threw the alms of your heart, and who will never forget the smile you gave him at parting. Good-bye!

KIT. You are not going away? (*crosses to R.*)

MY. Yes! I find that I, who never laid a shilling on any chances, have plunged like a callow lordling, and have staked my life on—a—great—event.

KIT. (*aside*) He means me!

MY. I'm in for it, like a fool. I'm an outsider, entered by mistake—you understand.

KIT. I—I think so.

MY. I'm bound to pay forfeit and scratch myself, and I'll do it, while I can look Sir Budleigh in the eyes with a face as honest as his own.

KIT. Must you go? (*sits by desk*)

MY. Yes ! it is impossible—but I must—d'ye see ?

KIT. Is the difficulty one—out of which—Bud can help you ?

MY. No !

KIT. Is it one out of which—I could—help you ?

MY. No, no.

KIT. We owe you so much.

MY. That's it. No—I don't mean that—(*gets to c.*) quite the contrary—nothing of the kind.

KIT. Your pride renders you ungenerous. (*goes to chimney-glass and is observing MYLES's movements in it; when finally he sits down, she returns to chair at desk*)

MY. What have I to be proud of ? Proud ? How can one so poor be generous ?

KIT. You will not go without bidding my brother good-bye.

MY. Oh do send me away, Miss Woodstock, do—do—help me to go ; 'tis hard enough anyway, but don't make it harder for me.

KIT. If it must be—good-bye.

MY. Good-bye—for ever. (*sits L.C.*)

KIT. (*sits by desk—aloud*) I cannot imagine what the nature of your difficulty may be. Confess, can it be that you have formed a hopeless attachment ?

MY. I have.

KIT. I thought so—for Phyllis ?

MY. Ah, no—for one far beyond my reach.

KIT. Beyond your reach. Good heavens ! You are not in love with my sister ?

MY. (*rises*) Oh, Miss Woodstock ! (*gets c.*)

KIT. With whom then ?

MY. With whom—— (*enter GEOFFREY by window ; to GEOFFREY*) Ah ! how do you do ?

GEO. How are you ? Fine weather.

MY. Very.

GEO. For the green crops.

MY. Very fine for the green crops. (*exit L.C.*)

GEO. Kitty, I am in another mess.

KIT. So am I.

GEO. I met that fellow Daisy. He told me that he had been paid, and by whom ?

KIT. I don't know.

GEO. Then you shall know. (*COLONEL TUDOR speaks outside, then enters window L.*) Father, I have a confession to make. A college friend asked me to lend my name to some notes of hand. He did not mean wrong, but he was unable to meet them, and I am in for it.

KIT. Oh, Uncle Jack, let me help Geoff—you have thousands of mine.

GEO. Yes, he has, but he's not going to get me out of a mess at your expense. He's your guardian—a nice guardian you would make of him.

COL. T. My dear! you don't understand what an awful proposition you are making to me.

KIT. I beg your pardon.

GEO. It is all right—— You are only a girl.

KIT. Yes, dear.

COL. T. What is the amount of the debt?

GEO. Nearly £4,000!

COL. T. You take my breath away!

GEO. But, that is not the worst of it.

KIT. He is in another mess.

GEO. It has been paid.

COL. T. By Bud, I'll be sworn. (*rises*)

GEO. No, sir. It was paid by Mrs. Welter.

KIT. God bless her!

Enter MRS. WELTER and PHYLLIS R.U.E.

GEO. It was all she possessed in the world. Oh, father, we cannot accept that sacrifice.

COL. T. (*crosses to c.*) My dear, excellent soul, I thank you for what you have done for that boy of mine. (*PHYLLIS and KITTY kiss*)

MRS. W. What do you mean?

COL. T. But we cannot accept. (*gets back L.*)

MRS. W. Lor, Colonel, I don't know how you came to hear about it! Can't you take it as a loan?

COL. T. No! Impossible!

GEO. It was so good of you. But that makes it all the worse for me.

COL. T. I have some bonds and shares at home that you must allow me to send to you until they can be converted into money. We understand your feelings, but it would not do at all. (*crosses c.*)

GEO. Oh, no. It wouldn't do at all.

MRS. W. If you understand my feelings, why do you hurt them like this?

COL. T. Geoff, take Kitty home. I wish to speak to Mrs. Welter alone. (*goes up L.*)

GEO. (*c.*) Mrs. Welter, I am so awfully obliged to you; but—I can't!—there, I'm unable to explain—the governor will tell you—thank you! thank you! (*smacks her on back, exit window L.C. PHYLLIS goes to MRS. WELTER*)

KIT. (*crosses to COLONEL L.C.*) Uncle Jack, dear, won't you let me help Geoff? Do?

COL. T. No! Go home. Get out!

KIT. Listen!

COL. T. Not a word! Don't open your mouth! If you do, I'll—I'll—kiss it. (*KITTY runs out L.C.*)

PHY. Oh, mother, this has been my fault. (*going R.*)

MRS. W. No, it has been mine!

COL. T. Don't go, Phyllis. What I have to say concerns you, and you had better hear it. Come here to me. (*she goes to COLONEL*) What age are you?

PHY. Seventeen in June.

COL. T. You came in with the roses, didn't you? You and Geoff have been playfellows all your lives?

PHY. Yes.

COL. T. He was nineteen in March. You are children no longer, do you understand?

PHY. No!

COL. T. Mr. Spooner informed me that the tenants are talking about you. They say that you and my son meet in the paddock every morning before sunrise; you two alone!

PHY. No; Thunderbolt's there.

COL. T. The horse would afford very little protection for your character, my dear.

PHY. My character!

MRS. W. (*crosses to COLONEL TUDOR*) I understand, sir. It is my place and duty to explain to Phyllis that she is too old now to keep company with your son. I forgot that she is more than a child. It is my fault, she must be forgiven.

PHY. What have I done? (*gets R. and sits by desk*)

COL. T. You will see that we could not accept any obligation which could afford ground for——

MRS. W. Yes, Colonel. I see it now. I have to ask your pardon for intruding on your business, but I did not mean—— (*cries; goes to chair front of table*)

COL. T. (*rises*) No! no! You dear, generous, kind creature. (*follows her up*) I know what feelings prompted you, and I am grateful. But for Phyllis's sake we must be careful; you understand, for Phyllis's sake (*music. MRS. WELTER gets to window in recess*) we must be careful—you understand, for Phyllis's sake. (*kisses her, then goes to PHYLLIS and kisses her; wipes his eyes; stamps; goes to piano for hat; tries to sing; when at window L.C. looks at them*) God bless you both. (*goes off shouting*) Boy, where's my horse? (*passes window; music*)

PHY. Mother, won't Geoffrey come here any more?

MRS. W. No.

PHY. And I—I must not see him again.

MRS. W. No. (*coming from recess, down to chair L.C.*) They say you are sweethearting. They say you are too old to be playfellows. It must end. I am sore-hearted to part with the boy, for I never knew until now how much I love him. (*sits L.C.*)

PHY. (*who has been staggering as if about to faint*) Oh! mother, mother! (*gets to c.*)

MRS. W. What's the matter?

PHY. As he spoke I felt what I never knew. I saw what I had never seen till then. Mother, our lives have not been child's play.

MRS. W. (*catching her in her arms*) Phyllie, my darling, you don't know what you are saying.

PHY. I do! I do! And I never knew it until now. (*buries her face in her mother's lap*)

RATHER SLOW CURTAIN.

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE.—*A room on the grand-stand, with a balcony overlooking the race-course. MRS. PINCOTT and WILCOX engaged in unpacking a lunch-basket and laying out a picnic. Cold dinner on table. Two grooms assisting. This scene may be arranged to take place in a tent, through the opening of which the race-course is visible, the tent being on a hill, so as to command a panoramic view of it.*

MRS. P. There now ! they have forgotten to send the salt and pepper.

WIL. (*searching in basket*) No, here it is ; inside the coffee-pot.

MRS. P. They have put the bottle of pickles atop of the pigeon pie, and the crust is all mashed in. What shall we do ?

WIL. It will do for the servants. I 'ope Thomas has took good care of the hicc.

MRS. P. I fear Thomas has been taking good care of the brandy bottle.

Enter SPOONER and LADY MILLICENT.

SPOON. Awfully sorry, dear Lady Millicent, but I could not do it. If I were seen in the ring—consider my cloth ; and if it reached the ears of my bishop I'd get a wiggling, don't you know. (*crosses to R. WILCOX goes to balcony and looks out. Yells in distance*)

MIL. Something has happened. (*goes up to better overlook the betting-stand*) From the balcony here I overlook the betting-stand, where excited crowds are gathered. (*comes down a little*) There, do you hear those yells ? (*yells distant*)

WIL. (*who has gone to balcony and looked out*) It is Mr. O'Hara, my lady, who has just rode up on horseback. The people are mobbing him. (*looking off R. ; grooms go off*)

SPOON. I am not surprised. (*goes up R. of sofa*)

MIL. I thought he was so popular.

SPOON. The news has just reached the course that he has sold the favourite—sold him the day before the race to the most notorious thief out of gaol. (*exit WILCOX L.*) He has let in the public, who were betting 2 to 1 on Ballinahinch yesterday ; 30 to 1 against him is offered now, and no takers. I stand to lose sixty pounds. (*by this is looking*

Enter KITTY R.

MIL. I don't understand it, do you ?

KIT. Yes I do, only too well. (*crosses to L.*)

SPOON. (*looking out*) There he is ; with the crowd around him. (MILLY *gets to R.C.*) How white his face is. They will tear him to pieces. Oh ! where are the police ? (*exit L. ; falls over hamper*) I beg your pardon !

KIT. (L.) And I stood there, and saw my work. I understood what he had done for your sake.

MIL. (c.) For me ? For my sake ? Are you mad, Kitty ?

KIT. (L) I am—very nearly. Are you so blind as not to perceive that O'Hara has obtained those letters from Marcus by selling the only thing he had in the world ?

MIL. But why should he make such a sacrifice ? I have no claim on him.

KIT. He made it—because he is unfortunate enough to—love me. (*crosses to R.*)

MIL. You ? Has he said so ?

KIT. No.

MIL. Then how do you know ?

KIT. Do you think I am a fool ? I knew it before he did. I tell you the man has ruined himself. I have beggared him. (*crosses to L.*)

MIL. This sounds more like love than regret. (KITTY *sits*)

KIT. Well, suppose it is. What then ?

MIL. Then you are your own mistress. Why don't you give him encouragement ?

KIT. I did.

MIL. Do you mean to tell me you let him understand that he might—

KIT. Yes ; and he didn't ! He is stupidly proud !

MIL. He will find that love is stronger than pride.

KIT. I feel it is ; and I shall have to propose to him before he will speak out. Could you not give him a push ?

MIL. How ? (*laughs*) Shall I say to him, "My dear Mr. O'Hara, my sister Kitty has lost her heart to you ; please give her some encouragement."

Enter SIR BUDLEIGH and MYLES R.U.E.

BUD. You will be in safety here.

MIL. What do the wretches want ?

MY. They wanted my scalp.

BUD. (L.C.) One fellow reached for it, when O'Hara let out his left, and the claimant was helped away with a broken jaw. While the spectators were lost in admiration, we escaped.

MIL. The man did not hurt you, I hope?

MY. Not much; he spoiled my knuckle. 'Tis provoking that it is my bridle-hand.

Enter COLONEL TUDOR. SIR BUDLEIGH goes up to COLONEL TUDOR with KITTY.

COL. T. Budleigh, the police cannot handle the crowd. You and I must face them, or we shall have no races.

MIL. What do they want with Budleigh? Why should he go? *(takes her arm and walks R.)*

BUD. Uncle Jack and I are the stewards of the meeting. Could you learn what the people want?

COL. T. They want O'Hara to ride the favourite.

BUD. Is there any reason why you should not?

MY. None in life, barring Mr. Daisy, who owns my beauty. He would not let me up.

MIL. Why not?

MY. Because I would win the race and ruin them.

BUD. May I say that you consent to ride?

MY. With all the pleasure in life.

BUD. Then, by St. George, you shall! The Irish horse shall run and run square, if I have to take him from the stable myself and lead him to the starting post.

Cries and tumult outside. Enter MR. DAISY dilapidated, dragged in by MRS. WELTER. SIR BUDLEIGH get extreme R.

MY. Mr. Daisy?

MR. D. What is left of him!

MRS. W. I ask pardon for bringing him here, but the crowd were employed upon him, when Mr. Geoff came up and beat them back. *(goes first to KITTY, then back)*

MR. D. While that coward Wylie sneaked off like a cur. Yes, Colonel, your son, who has no cause to love me, behaved like a man and a gentleman, which he is.

COL. T. (L.C.) I hope so.

BUD. Here is Mr. O'Hara, who is ready and willing to ride the favourite. We hear you refuse to give him the mount? *(sits across chair)*

MR. D. The 'oss don't belong to me, hexclusive. Daisy and Co. has wheels within wheels.

BUD. You mean that you run the horse to lose. *(sits across chair)*

COL. T. And Mr. O'Hara won't ride to order.

MR. D. Oh, Sir Budleigh! Give me thirty thousand a year, and I'll breed for the love of the 'oss, and race for the

honour of the thing. Don't be too hard on a poor man as has got to get his living.

BUD. The burglar has got to earn his living, only there is a prejudice against his line of business. Now, Mr. Daisy, no tricks shall disgrace this meeting, for the conduct of which Colonel Tudor here and myself are responsible. And, Mr. Daisy, if I catch you up to any of your tricks, I'll have you paraded before the stewards and have you warned off every race-course in England.

MR. D. (*pulling out a book*) Look here; Daisy and Co. have backed your stable, laying over 15,000 pounds on Locomotive, your own horse, Sir Budleigh. You ain't going back on us when we are workin' the horacle for your honour and glory. If Referee rides, it means your defeat and our ruin.

BUD. It means fair play. (*crosses to R. corner*)

MR. D. You call that fair play! I stand to lose over 5,000 quid, jumpin' Moses. Who's agoin' to fair play me?

KIT. I will. (*gets O'HARA down L. corner*)

BUD. Kitty! What do you mean?

KIT. I mean to buy the horse at any price. I suppose he has one.

MR. D. Say done to £8,000, and he is yours—book, horse and all.

KIT. Done then—he is mine.

COL. T. Kitty, you take my breath away. (*goes up C.*)

KIT. (*to MYLES*) Now, Mr. O'Hara, will you ride for me? (*offers her hand to him*)

MY. Will I? (*throwing off his coat and standing in his jockey suit and colours, green and gold*) God bless you for the chance. I'll mount my beauty once again! Faugh-a-ballagh! is my cry—for my thigh is on my native pig's skin—and me name's O'Hara! (*shouts outside*)

MR. D. I beg your pardon, but would you give me a few minutes' start before the news is known? It will send the Irish horse up like a rocket—just time to get a pot on.

BUD. Get out, you blackguard—and don't let me see your face again!

Enter GEOFFREY.

GEO. The police have failed to clear the course. The crowd are calling for the stewards.

BUD. I'll clear it in a few words. Come with me, Milly. O'Hara, give my sister your arm. (*SIR BUDLEIGH, MILLICENT and MYLES go into the balcony.* *SIR BUDLEIGH raises his hat,* My sister, Miss Woodstock, has become the owner of

Ballinahinch. Mr. Myles O'Hara rides for the Budleigh stable.

GEO. Three cheers for Budleigh and fair play. (*deafening cheers are heard ; exeunt SIR BUDLEIGH, COLONEL TUDOR, and GEOFFREY, L.H.2E. ; MYLES and KITTY alone*)

KIT. Mr. O'Hara, will you tell me the truth ?

MY. That depends on what truth you want me to tell.

KIT. You sold your share in Ballinahinch to Lord Marcus ?

MY. I did.

KIT. On what terms ?

MY. Never mind.

KIT. You gave away all you had in the world to insure the happiness of my brother and his wife.

MY. If poor Fred had been alive and a witness to the dishonourable use made of those letters, he would have given all he had in the world to reclaim and destroy them.

KIT. And it was for his sake only that you made this sacrifice. You had no other motive ?

MY. I never had a motive in my life.

KIT. No ; but you have too many scruples.

MY. I hadn't one when the honour of my dead friend required defence.

KIT. You have one when you avoid seeking repayment for all that you have lost in fortune and public opinion.

MY. Misfortune is an epidemic in my country. If I had no troubles, I'd feel like an exile ; and, as for public opinion, I'd not change the Press full of it for the hearty embrace your brother gave me—for the grateful look in the eyes of his wife.

KIT. And where do I come in ? (*sits L.C.*) Have I no share ?

MY. (*aside, looking at her*) Oh ! she has it all, if she only knew it.

KIT. (*sits L.*) I pause for a reply. Your attachment to your friend is very touching ; your appreciation of Bud is sweet to me ; neither of them can thank you ; but surely I owe you something. (*offers her hand*) Will you not take it ? (*aside*) I am giving a lead over the fence.

MY. (*taking her hand*) Certainly.

KIT. My heart is your debtor for so much. (*gives her hand*)

MY. Don't—mention it. Let the obligation stand—to my credit, there.

KIT. You have established unlimited credit there.

MY. Miss Woodstock—Kitty—I beg your pardon, I didn't mean that.

KIT. Don't.

MY. It slipped out. I—I——

KIT. (*aside*) I wished it would——

MY. You have your hand in mine. Oh—if—if——

KIT. (*aside*) Now it is coming.

MY. If I dared to hope——

Enter GEOFFREY L.H., crosses to R. corner.

GEO. (R.) It is all right. (*gets R.*)

KIT. (*stamping with annoyance and snatching her hand away*) Oh! flog that boy; that's the second time he has done that. (*goes up. MYLES goes up C., KITTY up L.*)

GEO. Ballinahinch has regained his place in the betting.

MY. And I have lost mine.

GEO. Can you keep a secret? (*crosses to R.C.*)

MY. If you had seen me tried a minute ago, you would not ask me.

GEO. I am going to mount Thunderbolt.

KIT. (L.C.) You! He'll kill you.

MY. He is not a horse, he's an earthquake.

GEO. No, no; he is in one of his sweetest tempers. I rode him this morning; he went like a lamb.

MY. Phew!

KIT. Oh, Geoff, you are mad to attempt it. (*goes up to PHYLLIS, who enters*)

PHY. He's saddled. I've been talking to him; he's as good as gold.

KIT. Phyllis, if Geoff comes to grief, I'll never speak to you again.

PHY. He won't if he will remember what I say. (*crosses to GEOFF R.*) Don't pull at him; give him his head; don't try to teach him anything; let him worry at the bit and have his own away; sit quiet; keep a length behind Mr. O'Hara till you turn into the home stretch; then shake him up and blue lightning won't catch him. (*crosses to R.; PHYLLIS and GEOFFREY go up; she instructing him; exit GEOFFREY L.*)

MY. If she herself was in the saddle it would take the last inch out of my horse to show her the full front of my back. (*cheers outside; exit*)

KIT. (C.) Oh! I feel sure he'll win.

PHY. (R.) My heart is in my mouth.

KIT. Hark! They are cheering him.

PHY. Whom do you mean?

KIT. Myles—I mean Mr. O'Hara.

PHY. Surely you don't hope for *his* success.

KIT. Of course I do.

PHY. Oh, you horrid, unnatural thing. Do you hope an

Irish vagabond will show his heels to the Budleigh stable ?
Are you going back on your own flesh and blood ?

KIT. You are a spiteful, ungenerous, selfish little cat.
(*crosses to R.*)

PHY. (*goes up C.*) I know what it is. You are in love with that fellow. Everybody can see that.

KIT. (*crying*) Oh ! how dare you accuse me of that, Phyllis Welter, he's only a stranger—and he never—— Oh ! oh ! I know why you go on at me like this. It is because you are in love with Geoff. Do you think I am blind ? Oh ! oh !

PHY. (*crying*) I am not. He's only a b—b—boy, and I—I hate you. Oh ! oh !

KIT. Get out of my sight, you little wretch. Oh ! oh !
(*after wandering about crying, they meet and embrace*)

Enter MRS. WELTER R.H.

MRS. W. Where is the lad, where is Master Geoffrey ? He must not ride. There is a plan to be used to worry Thunderbolt, by making false starts, until he gets mad and bolts. (*down to chair R.H.*)

PHY. I'll ride across to the post. I'll stand by. He won't bolt if he hears my voice. (*exit L.*)

MRS. W. Oh ! Miss Kitty. I don't know how I ever come to give in to them children. What will the Colonel and Sir Budleigh say ?

Enter SERVANTS, SIR BUDLEIGH, COLONEL and MILLICENT ; they go to lunch table. MRS. WELTER gets to back C.

BUD. (R.) Ah ! this looks inviting. Come, Milly, take a glass of champagne—a bumper to our stable. But where is Lord Marcus ? I expected him to join our party.

COL. T. The Prince and the Princess are expected to attend our Meeting, so Marcus is on duty as their escort.

BUD. So, Mrs. Welter, you insist on running Thunderbolt. I see his number up.

MRS. W. Yes, sir. (*C. at back*)

BUD. Have you persuaded a jockey to risk his life ? It is an indictable offence to put a boy on him. What do you say, Milly, shall I order his number to be taken down ?
(*MRS. WELTER gets to seat L.C.*)

COL. T. Nonsense. An English boy should not fear the devil if he could be saddled. Mrs. Welter is right. A broken bone or two will do a lad good.

KIT. Oh ! if he only knew what he is talking about.

MIL. Oh, Bud, don't expose anyone to danger. (*bell rings*)

COL. T. Too late! (*rises and goes up c. to back and looks off. MILLICENT follows him*) There is the bell to send them to the post. There go Geoff and Phyllis on their ponies, flying across the heath. What a picture they make?

MRS. W. (*aside*) I want to go down on my knees and pray. (*WILCOX and GROOMS go into balcony and look off*)

MIL. (*to KITTY*) How pale you are! What's the matter?

KIT. (*aside*) I think I'm going to faint.

BUD. There has not been such a day as this for many a year. Don't you feel proud, Mrs. Welter? (*SPOONER goes up*)

MRS. W. I'm feeling as I never felt afore in all my life.

COL. T. Three flyers in the field—Locomotive, Thunderbolt (*coming down R.*) and Ballinahinch—all our stable—all favourites.

BUD. And Kitty running against the Squire. Haw! haw! Her horse, and against my two! And I'd give a thousand she should beat me.

SPOON. (*who appears with a race-glass L.H. door*) There is some trouble at the starting-post. They have made one false start. (*goes off R.H.*)

WIL. It looks like a haccident.

COL. T. It is that devil, Thunderbolt, at his tricks. (*all the party cross up to the balcony*)

KIT. Milly, I'm going. I feel I'm going. Geoff is there.

MIL. Where?

KIT. On that Devil of a horse.

MRS. W. I shall be tried for murder.

MIL. Geoff riding Thunderbolt! (*everybody turns in surprise; comes down c.*)

COL. T. (*turning*) What! My son! Speak, woman! Do you mean to tell me that you have put my boy on that brute?

MRS. W. Oh, Colonel! He would do it. He wants to win that money that you would not let me pay.

COL. T. (*c.*) Damn the money! How dare you turn a Tudor into a jockey! (*crosses into L. corner*)

MIL. You said an English boy should have no fear.

COL. T. Yes; but his father may. I'll never forgive him. (*turning crosses to R.H. corner*) I'll send him to sea.

MRS. W. Colonel! Don't take on so. It was all my fault. Take it out of me. Don't blame the lad. He is a hero.

COL. T. (*c.*) Blame him! I'll break every bone in his skin, (*up c. towards balcony*) disgracing his name.

BUD. There, they are getting into line. I can see my colours. One—two—three. Yes, my horses are there.

Thunderbolt is moving like a lamb. Bravo—there's a start! They are off! Hurrah! Haw! haw! Green is in front! The Irish horse leads!

COL. T. Eh! eh! Where's my boy? (*up to back*)

BUD. Nowhere—in the ruck—away behind.

COL. T. Disgrace and defeat! (*to MRS. WELTER*) I'll indict you. (*turns and advances, threatening MRS. WELTER*)

BUD. He is closing in the gap.

COL. T. Who?—what! Geoff! (*turns back and goes up*)

BUD. Thunderbolt passes through like a bird. Bravo, Geoff! He took that bullfinch grandly! Bravo, boy!

COL. T. Ha! ha! (*advancing down c., waving his crop*)
By Jove, it takes a Tudor to show them the way!

Enter GEOFFREY. His cap and jacket off and with muddy breeches.

COL. T. Geoff!

GEO. I've been in such a mess.

COL. T. What has happened?

GEO. I don't know. It was a false start. When I tried to turn him, the brute reared, fell backward, and I went a mucker. When I recovered my legs, they had shifted the side-saddle from Phyllis' mare, and she was up—in my place.

MRS. W. What! my girl!

GEO. Yes! She grabbed my cap and jacket and now she's riding Thunderbolt. (*cheers outside*)

MRS. W. Turn my daughter into a jockey?

COL. T. Don't take on so. Don't blame the girl. She is a hero.

BUD. Thunderbolt! Thunderbolt has collared the Irish horse.

MRS. W. Oh dear! Oh dear! My girl will be killed!
(COLONEL TUDOR *raised on groom's shoulder*) Has she got the weight?

GEO. Yes; she carries it in her saddle; it was never removed.

BUD. Here they come. 'Tis a race; 'tis a race! (*at back*)
Neck and neck! The Irish horse has it! Cherry—cherry walks in his green for ever.

Shouts outside: "Thunderbolt!" "Ballinahinch wins!"
"Thunderbolt!"

GEO. Wait for the double fence—and water jump! Look! She gives him his head! (*a great cry is heard outside*) She clears it like a bird.

BUD. By George, she rides like an angel.

COL. T. I'm proud of her; how she brings him up.

BUD. Good race, good race. Let him go, Phyllis, let him out. She laps his quarters. They race in nose and nose.

MIL. Who wins—who wins?

BUD. Wait for the numbers to go up. Here they come. (*reads*) Thunderbolt first! Ballinahinch second!

Enter SPOONER R.H., his hat smashed in and his clothes in disorder.

COL. T. What is the matter?

SPOON. I have no idea. (*crosses down c. to R.H. corner*) A party who was pursued by the mob took refuge behind me. The sanctuary of my person was violated, and I became mixed up in it. (*cheers*)

Enter MYLES with PHYLLIS.

MY. Egorra! She's done it!

MRS. W. (*angrily*) She has!

PHY. (*kneeling at MRS. WELTER's feet and sobbing hysterically*) I couldn't help it, mummy. I was kick—carried away! (*MRS. WELTER, relenting, shakes her finger at PHYLLIS and laughs. GEOFFREY raises her. The COLONEL takes her in his arms and kisses her. MYLES shakes hands with SIR BUDLEIGH. Music and cheers heard off*)

QUICK CURTAIN.

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE.—*Same as in Acts 1 and 2. Chair L.C., by fire.*

MILLICENT L., KITTY R., and the COLONEL discovered R. ;
GEOFFREY walking up and down at back.

COL. T. Is the boy mad ?

GEO. I shall be twenty years old next year.

KIT. Meanwhile you will be nineteen next month.

GEO. I have no time to waste. I don't mean to lose three years at Oxford. I want to graduate in the College of Life—out in the far West.

MIL. Who has been filling your head with this nonsense ?

GEO. Roydon Beecher, my chum.

MIL. He found plenty of room there.

GEO. He is going out to Colorado—that is, if I will go with him. Old England is getting to small for young England to breathe in. She's the old lady who lived in a shoe, who had so many children she didn't know what to do. I don't agree with many fellows who say she is played out.

KIT. That is very good of you.

MIL. And what on earth are you and young Beecher going to be out there ?

GEO. Cowboys !

COL. T. What ?

GEO. We shall ride about on ponies and swing long whips.

COL. T. I'd like to swing a short one. (L. of GEOFFREY)

KIT. And where is this Colo——what d'ye call it ?

GEO. (*waving his arm generally*) Oh, it is out there, you know—in Mexico.

MIL. Does it belong to England ?

GEO. Of course it does. Our swell fellows go out there—*younger brothers*, and chappies out of luck.

MIL. I have heard geography is not a strong point at Eton.

GEO. Eton is not a grammar school.

KIT. No. I observe that in your letters to me.

GEO. You don't mean to say you keep 'em.

KIT. (*rises, gets to c., and hounds him round piano to back*) I have in my jewel-case every blessed line you wrote to me—from the first, where you spelt "dear" with two "ee's" and "Kitty" with one "t." I've kissed them into rags.

Enter SIR BUDLEIGH, L.C.

BUD. I never felt so troubled. (*gets to fire*)

MIL. What has happened to vex you?

BUD. Mrs. Welter proposes to resign the stable. She and Phyllis are going to leave England.

COL. T. More emigration! There is an epidemic. (*gets R.*) Where does that old fool intend to go to?

BUD. She has a brother, it seems, settled out in some outlandish place in America. I forget where she said.

MIL. Was it Colorado?

BUD. Yes; that's where they are going.

KIT. (*to* GEOFFREY) Oh! You little fraud.

Enter MRS. WELTER and PHYLLIS, C.L.

COL. T. What is all this nonsense?

MRS. W. We have made up our minds, Colonel. Phyllis wants a change. She wants to go away.

MIL. At such a moment, when she is the talk of all London? The "Illustrated Press" devotes a cartoon to the event.

MRS. W. That's where it is, my lady. So much talk and cartoonin' ain't no good for a young girl. Then Sir Budleigh have spoiled her, and the Dook, he has invited her to Lynden Lee. All this is no life for Jack Welter's daughter. 'Twill end in making her too good for a farmer's home, and not good enough for yours. Then where will she be? Nowheres!

COL. T. (*going to* PHYLLIS) What is the matter with you? (*goes to* PHYLLIS R.)

PHY. Nothing. I've been too happy, that's all. (*sobbing*) Happier than was good for me. So—so—they are going to take me out of training, and—and—turn me out to—to grass!

COL. T. (*aside to her*) Is it about Geoff?

PHY. (*throwing her arms around his neck*) No, no, no!

COL. T. Come out into the garden; I want to talk to you. (*he takes her out, c.* MRS. WELTER follows them)

KIT. Here, Geoff, take Bud out, he's very fond of Phyllis. You may want him. (*puts* BUDLEIGH *up c.*)

BUD. I cannot understand it all.

KIT. It is not necessary that you should. Go out with Geoff after Uncle Jack. Oh, if we had someone to bring Mrs. Welter to her senses.

BUD. Just so—I—can only call names and swear.

Enter WILCOX, R.C.

WIL. The Reverend Mr. Spooner.

KIT. The very man we wanted.

BUD. So he is.

Enter SPOONER R.C.

SPOON. My dear Miss Woodstock, do I intrude?

KIT. Not at all. You are the very man we wanted to see.

SPOON. So happy! Permit me one moment's interview.

KIT. Yes, in the garden—in the garden with Uncle Jack.
(SIR BUDLEIGH and GEOFFREY take his arm and hurry him out)

BUD. } This way—this way. (*exeunt R.C.*)
GEO. }

MIL. Poor little martyr, he loves you so.

KIT. (*to WILCOX*) We expected Mr. O'Hara to call.

WIL. He came in a few minutes ago, miss, with Lord Marcus, but enquired for Sir Budleigh, with whom he said he had private business. Will you receive my lord?

MIL. Certainly. (*exit WILCOX R.U.E.*) I cannot understand it.

KIT. Nor I. But O'Hara has the letters, so you are safe.

MIL. I do not feel so.

Enter MARCUS R.U.E.

MAR. Our regiment has been ordered out to India, so I came to take my leave, and express my sincere regret for the position I find we are obliged to assume. Our legal adviser assures us that we cannot possibly disregard our obligations as executors to the late Mr. Dacre, but must deliver the packet, whatever it contains, to Sir Budleigh.

KIT. We?

MAR. Yes, Mr. O'Hara, who is joined with me in the trust, fully agrees with that view.

KIT. I don't believe it.

MAR. You will see presently, for he is with your brother at this moment.

Enter SIR BUDLEIGH and MYLES laughing R.C.

BUD. I don't think we shall hear any more of Colorado and cowboys—Geoff goes to Eton, Mrs. Welter and Phyllis stay home to keep house for Uncle Jack. Now if we could induce O'Hara to take up his quarters near us!

MY. (*at chair by piano*) Well, I had an idaya of joining my old friend, Fred Dacre.

BUD. I thought he was dead?

MY. So he wrote me—but knowing how unreliable he always was I cabled the colonel commanding his regiment in India these words: "When and where did Captain

THE JILT.

Dacre die?" Last night I received this answer from Dacre himself. (*reading telegram*) "A month ago I was married to the Belle of Bombay—come out and see her; if short of funds draw on me for 500."

MIL. Not dead! (*falls in BUDLEIGH'S arms*)

KIT. Only married.

MY. It is so easy to mistake the events.

BUD. I wish he could see with what pleasure we receive the news of his marriage. I wonder if he has heard of mine?

MY. I conveyed the news to him—and his lordship and myself as his executors are commissioned to convey to you his good wishes and return to Lady Woodstock this packet of letters which he feels he is no longer justified in retaining. (*to MARCUS.*) Checkmate.

MAR. A narrow escape.

MY. I hope your lordship may have as narrow an escape out of your mess.

MAR. My mess?

MY. Haven't you heard?

MAR. No.

MY. Mr. Daisy has disappeared with all the money paid by Miss Woodstock for Ballinahinch.

MAR. Bolted!

MY. To-morrow the creditors intend to take possession of the books and papers in his office, and if your lordship is not beforehand with them your connection with that firm will be discovered.

MAR. The devil!

MY. Just so—straight tip—take it.

MAR. I will, thank you.

MY. You've just got sixteen minutes to catch the next train. (*Exit MARCUS*)

BUD. I say, Mil, suppose we settle the home farm on Geoff. I think some part of it is included in your marriage settlements—let me look over them.

MIL. I have not got them.

BUD. Where are they, dear?

MIL. (*rises*) They are burnt—I destroyed them a month after our marriage.

BUD. Burnt them—wherefore? (*sits L.*)

MIL. Because I obtained them from you under false pretences. When I consented to become your wife, I did not love you, I loved—someone else. And I went to your arms with a breaking heart. Even on our wedding day I wrote to my rejected lover. See, here are my letters—read them—read—and learn what a vile thing has crept into your

home. (*gives letters*) Oh, Bud, dear, you have taught me to love you, (*SIR BUDLEIGH rises and puts letters on mantelshelf*) and I cannot be false any longer to my own heart, and to yours—read, and know when I stood beside you at the Altar the vow I uttered was a lie. (*kneels*)

BUD. I knew it. (*lifting her head up*)

MIL. You knew it?

BUD. Hush! Don't despise me. I accepted you with another man in your heart; I knew it. But love is so mean and selfish. I hoped you would help me to displace my rival. Day by day I watched your struggle with yourself. I saw the old love die, and the young love nursed by pity was born in your heart. Then, as I felt your arms creep round me, I knew you were mine at last.

MIL. Yours, yours! (*puts her arms around him*)

BUD. (*raises her*) And now you ask me to pry into your girlish life, to find some dead loves there to throw into your face because you did not love me before you learned that I was worthy to be loved? You ask me to bring shame to your cheek, tears to your eyes. My darling, you were never unjust or unkind to me till now. (*throws letters into fire and draws her to him; both sit*)

MY. I hope you will give an eye to the poor horse. Mrs. Welter has promised to let me know how he gets on, and if you would try him, he would carry you well. (*gets to her L.*) I never touched him with whip or spur, nor spoke a rough word to him. He is as gentle as yourself.

KIT. When shall we see you again?

MY. I'm thinking of looking up a friend of mine that went abroad some time ago.

KIT. Where?

MY. I forget—

KIT. To Colorado, perhaps. Mr. O'Hara, I cannot quite understand you! Do you know that you are the only man that has been received here who has never made love to me?

MY. Good heavens, Miss Woodstock! what d'ye take me for? Do you think I should forget myself so far! You know who and what I am.

KIT. I think so.

MY. And who and what you are. Think of the extreme distance between us.

KIT. Extremes meet sometimes.

MY. I am a poor, broken-down adventurer, penniless, homeless—a Bohemian in the city, a vagabond in the shires. I live in one room, that I may save money enough to pay for the keep of Ballinahinch. I'm a tramp that stops at your gate, and takes a hungry look at you through the bars.

KIT. So you are going to leave us ?

MY. And I leave my life here.

KIT. In the stable with my horse ?

MY. No ! at your feet, I can't help it. Your eyes wring it out of my soul. I must speak or die.

KIT. Then speak for heaven's sake. (*rises*)

MY. I may offend you.

KIT. The only offence has been your silence.

MY. My angel !

KIT. I'm nothing so distant.

MY. My idol !

KIT. I'm neither wood nor stone.

MY. My love !

KIT. Yes, yours. (*he kisses her. Aside*) Oh, it was a long time coming. (*to him*) Don't mind them. They are better engaged than attending to us. Talk to me. (*she plays lightly on the piano. GEOFFREY and PHYLLIS come in, GEOFFREY'S arm around her, he earnestly pouring words into her ear ; they go towards the conservatory. MRS. WELTER and the COLONEL appear at the window*)

CURTAIN.

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